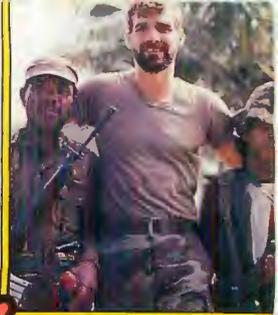


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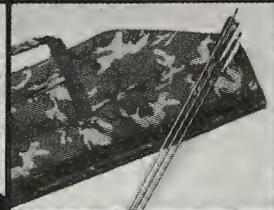
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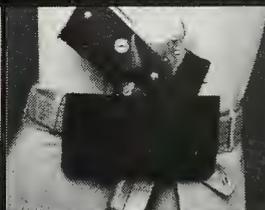
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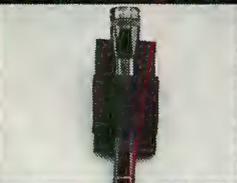
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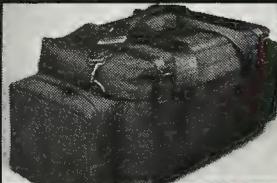
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**David James**

James accompanied Koevoet — the elite South West African Counterinsurgency Unit — on numerous patrols to gather material for his book. Inexplicably the terts



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kept shooting at *him* — and they didn't always miss **30**

## BLOODY PANJSHIR

**Peter Douglas**

Nowhere else in Afghanistan can one gauge the defeat of the Soviets as well as in the wreck-strewn Panjshir Valley. Our veteran correspondent makes it there and at risk of life, limb and his pants, interviews Massoud, the mujahideen's foremost field commander **36**

## SPECIAL FORCES FORGE

**Major R.B. Anderson**

They're tough, highly trained, and only the best need apply. Today's Special Forces are the special operations spear point of the 1990s and the John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School makes them that way. Just what does it take to wear the Green Beret? **44**

## KILLED IN ACTION

**Alain Haas**

On 31 May SOF Foreign Correspondent Lance Motley died in Thailand of wounds received the day before from a Burmese mortar round. French journalist Alain Haas was with Lance inside Burma when tragedy struck, and brings us this first-hand account **52**



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## MR. DELLA CASA, I PRESUME?

**Robert MacKenzie**

Our contributing editor for unconventional ops gets involved in just that when he's called upon to secure the release of an English journalist held for 18 months inside war-torn Mozambique. **58**



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## PARA KNIFE

**Chuck Karwan**

American paratroopers and pilots are literally dying for want of a good knife. Why? SOF's edged-weapon expert jumps on the problem and comes up with a few good solutions that will save their lives **62**

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One we won

## COVER

COVER: Tomorrow's special operations warriors are being trained today at the John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School. Just what does it take to wear the Special Forces green beret? SF Major R.B. Anderson takes a look at the extraordinary curriculum and training that produces America's best, beginning on page 44. Photo: DoD

INSET: SOF Foreign Correspondent Lance Motley in the field with Philippine army patrol hunting communist insurgents. French journalist Alain Haas reports on the circumstances that ended Lance's life in Burma earlier this year. Story on page 52.



# COMMAND GUIDANCE

by Robert K. Brown

## Use the Military Option

**T**HE body of Lieutenant Colonel William Higgins was still dangling at the end of a Shi'ite noose on global television when articles started to appear in the press intimating that the president would find he had few military options available to him should he choose to retaliate.

And, incredibly, the commander-in-chief has all but agreed.

The truth is the president has an abundance of options available to him should he choose to use them. For the record, here are five:

1) Ask Congress to declare war on Iran, Syria and Lebanon, and wage war until they cough up the hostages or are totally destroyed.

The taking of American hostages in Lebanon is done with the intent of manipulating American foreign policy, and as such it is an act of war against the United States. It is high time it was treated as such.

If declaring war seems extreme, it is worth recalling that we used to do so routinely when confronted with foreign powers who took Americans hostages for reasons of state, avarice, and Islam. The wars against the Barbary pirates in the early 19th century ended the practice for more than 175 years — and also resulted in the repatriation of the hostages.

2) Ask Congress to issue letters of marque and reprisal.

Letters of marque and reprisal are commissions to privateers. The same clause of the Constitution that gives Congress the power to declare war grants it the power to issue them. Letters of marque and reprisal (which, incidentally, need not be limited to naval privateers) are a uniquely appropriate way of combating terrorism, because modern terrorism is merely a means of waging war by proxy. The issues of letters of marque would be no more than replying in kind.

3) Ask Congress to repeal the present prohibition on assassinations, and when it is repealed, start killing not only terrorists, but the sponsors of terrorism.

Terrorism continues because those who perpetrate it can do so with impunity. It is time they learned fear.

4) Ask Congress to authorize a naval blockade of hostage-taking nations, and maintain it until the hostages are released.

When you blockade a nation, you in effect take the whole country hostage. That seems a uniquely suitable way of dealing with countries that have made hostage-taking an integral part of their foreign policy.

5) Use the War Powers Act.

The War Powers Act states that if the president sends U.S. forces into combat he must get the permission of Congress to continue the fight for longer than 30 days. Instead of rejecting it as an intrusion on presidential authority, the president should treat it as a license to wage 30-day wars. Instead of thinking in terms of "surgical" strikes to rescue hostages, the president should think in terms of 30-day punitive expeditions to clean out the Bekaa Valley or destroy Iran's oil fields, and perhaps in the process take large numbers of prisoners — preferably mullahs — who could be used as bargaining chips.

The question is not whether the president has options at hand with which to retaliate against hostage takers. The question centers on whether President Bush has the wit, will, and courage to use the wealth of options that are available to him.

We'll see. ✂

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# THE TERRIFYING THREE

## Uzi, Ingram, and Intratec Weapons Families

by Duncan Long

The Uzi, MAC-10 and TEC-9 submachine guns: are they really the ultimate in weaponry? Duncan Long takes a critical look at the Uzi, Ingram and Intratec weapons families and provides his own conclusions on the state of the submachine gun in today's weapons wars. Discover everything you've wanted to know about submachine guns in general and the "terrifying three" in particular, including specifications for the various models and their variants. Long thoroughly covers ammunition, care and maintenance, aiming and lighting devices, accessories and troubleshooting, and even includes a chapter on purchasing a used firearm without getting burned. All this plus lists of weapons and ammo manufacturers and distributors and other publications with SMG info. Find out what's really going on in the world of submachine guns with **The Terrifying Three**. 8½ x 11, softcover, 72 photos, illus., 136 pp. **\$20.00**



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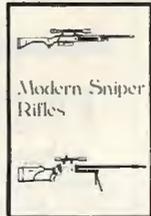
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## CORRECTION

In our September issue we ran an article entitled "Bring 'em Back Alive" about Corporate Training Unlimited, a North Carolina-based firm specializing in high-risk operations.

Through our error we failed to list David Halevy as co-author of the article, and we apologize to him. Halevy is a 19-year veteran correspondent with *Time Magazine* and a former member of Israeli special operations force.

The writing team of David Halevy and Neil Livingstone, two of the world's leading authorities on international terrorism, has produced four major articles for SOF — "Defanging the Serpent" and "The Most Dangerous Man in the World," Dec. '88; "Bring 'em Back Alive," Sept. '89; and "Operation Betrayal," Oct. '89 — with more planned in the future.

## GREEN BERET REPRINT...

*The Green Beret Magazine* published by the 5th SFGA from 1966-1970 is being reprinted in five volumes, starting in reverse order with 1970, at \$25 plus \$2 shipping per year. Discount to SFA/SOA members. Write Steve Sherman, 2314 Cheshire Lane, Dept. SOF, Houston, TX 77018. Good reading then, good reading now.

# BULLETIN BOARD



SOFers Robert K. Brown and Mike Williams (far left and right) interview Son San, political head of the KPNLF (Khmer People's National Liberation Front), one of the few anti-communist revolutionary parties of Cambodia. Meeting took place at refugee camp Site 2, on Cambodian border in Thailand last June. Photo: Wichien Prichanant

## THE ALASKAN CANAL ZONE?...

Wrangell Island, Alaska — the size of Rhode Island and Delaware combined — was discovered in 1867 by U.S. sailors and formally taken into U.S. sovereignty in 1881. Bennett, Henrietta and Jeannette islands were discovered and taken into U.S. sovereignty in 1879 as a result of the famous expedition of Commander George Washington DeLong. So what? *What* is that while we write this the pinstripes at State are holding top secret negotiations with their Kremlin counterparts to cede these strategic islands, and an oil-rich chunk of the continental shelf the size of California, to the USSR. Why? Well, we have no boundary treaty with the USSR between Alaska and Siberia, and in the eight meetings held so far "they" decided that a little toward our side would be a nice place to draw the line. Senate Resolution 20 by Jesse Helms and House Bill 2383 by Rep. Dan Burton have been initiated with bipartisan support to prevent any such non-elected twits from giving away chunks of the USA without a treaty. It is to weep!

## VIETNAM TRIVIA...

*The Official Vietnam War Trivia Book* has been published by ESE Ltd., Dept. SOF, 7911 West Road, Houston, TX 77064. Costs \$5.95 plus \$2 ship/handling. Worth it for trivia freaks and bean and bullet counters, too.

## ONE DOWN, MANY TO GO...

Amid the rash of phoney Viet vets and self-proclaimed war heroes comes news from Arlington, Virginia, that one Chuck "Pierre" Taylor has been convicted of wearing a PX salad of medals and decorations on his surplus-store GI dress blues. Along with insignia proclaiming him to be an SFC, Taylor had insignia and ribbons indicating he had served 36 months in combat with the 101st Airborne, was in Special Forces, was a senior parachutist, had been awarded the Purple Heart, Bronze Star, Vietnam Service Medal, Army Commendation Medal, Cross of Gallantry with Palm — even the Good Conduct Medal. The court didn't think his conduct had been so good, however, and found him guilty. Taylor, who had been in the Army for 10 months back in 1975 but never saw combat, told the court he did it to meet girls. The prosecution said he did it to bilk some \$9,000 from the ladies. But scabs like this steal from more than their marks when they wear awards for which good men have traded their lives.

*Palmam qui meruit ferat.*

## FOR YOUR SIGNIFICANT OTHER...

If you get distaff grumblings for having your face in SOF at breakfast, fair is fair and we recommend you get her a sub to *Women and Guns*, a new paper targeted at women who use guns for defense, sport and pleasure. Only \$18 a year from 201 Paradise Point, Dept. SOF, Hot Springs AR 71913, or charge-card it at (501) 767-3160.

## SPEAKING OF AWARDS...

*Ekho Planety*, a weekly Soviet news and history magazine, says Soviet air force and antiaircraft units played an active role during the Suez crisis of the early 1970s — that they downed a number of Israeli planes and suffered heavy losses to Israeli air power. Then, *Drasnaya Zvezda*, the Soviet Army Daily



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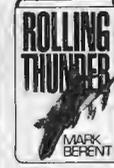
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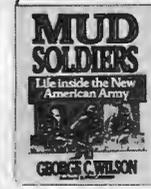
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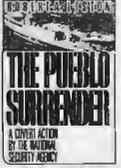
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recently noted that one officer has been honored for his role in downing 24 U.S. planes in Vietnam, where he and other Soviet troops had been sent to set up anti-aircraft systems, often taking part in combat operations.

**The New York Times captioned this photo of Vice President Dan Quayle visiting Salvadoran defense officials with the note that "Mr. Quayle is holding a Soviet-made flame thrower reportedly confiscated from guerrillas." Maybe the RPG tends to look like a flame thrower because he's holding it backwards. At any rate, you may sleep well: the National Guard and the Fourth Estate are awake. Photo: Agence France Press by Ivan C. Montecinos**

## **A T 600 RPM — FROM A REVOLVER...**

And for those of you who like to feed your mind while you eat but you eat with both hands, here's the best video to come down the chute in a while: *Fast and Fancy Shooters*, put together by Colonel Rex Applegate and starring Bill Jordan, Herb Parsons, Ed McGivern and a host of others. Jordan busts aspirins DA from the hip with a 4-inch Smith and Wesson, Herb Parsons does things with a shotgun you won't believe, and Ed McGivern empties a DA S&W at 600 RPM and hits with every round. Seventy-five minutes of history, instruction and pure enjoyment for shooters. We had a preview copy of this tape in the SOF booth at the NRA convention, and the booth was mobbed every time we ran it. VHS format, \$59.95 ppd from Wells Creek Knife and Gun Works, Dept. SOF, Box 22B, Scottsburg, OR 97473. Charge cards OK, call (800) 447-3527. P.S.: Happy 75th birthday to the colonel, who had a booth at the SOF convention this year.

## **C'MON UNCLE SAM, THINK ON A HIGHER PLANE...**

"It is the policy of the United States to deny importation of military aircraft from proscribed countries, based on our belief we should not contribute to their armament industries by purchasing implements of war," said BATF official Jack Killorin. He was speaking of three planes imported by the Planes of Fame Air Museum at the Chino, California, airport, which the BATF and State Department want to glom. What were these implements of war, the purchase of which contributed to the commies' armaments industry? A 1947 Soviet Antonov biplane purchased in Hungary, and two Korean War-era MiGs purchased in Poland. The planes were restored by museum volunteers, and have become the red stars of the museum's 90-plane collection. The dogfight over the status of the planes continues as we go to press. U.S. Representatives Jerry Lewis and "B-1" Bob Doman have pledged to intercede with Uncle Sam on behalf of history.

## **MISSISSIPPI VIET VETS MEMORIAL...**

Mississippi legislature passed a bill authorizing counties and municipalities to contribute to the Mississippi Vietnam Veterans Memorial Committee, the non-profit organization which came together from several groups to design and build a Viet vets memorial. The idea originated with a group of Biloxi Vietnamese-Americans looking for an idea to express their thanks for the sacrifices of Mississippians who fought to keep South Vietnam free.

A site on the gulf coast has been donated by the city of Biloxi, and designs have been submitted that will honor all branches of the armed forces, plus allied forces, with a special tribute to women who served, and names and ages of 637 Mississippians who died and the 18 still listed as missing. Donations to: P.O. Box 721, Dept. SOF, Biloxi, MS 39533; info at (601) 374-VETS.

## **VIETNAM WOMEN'S MEMORIAL PROJECT...**

A bill authorizing support of the project passed Congress this year, representing something of a victory for volunteerism, as the project is a private, non-profit organization. The bill authorized placing the memorial on federally administered land; a site has been selected and is awaiting approval by the Secretary of the Interior as we go to press. We had 250,000 women in uniform during the Vietnam era, and a tribute is in order. For info on how you can get involved call (202) 328-7253.

## **FUNDAMENTAL PROBLEMS...**

As many as 30 mujahideen military leaders, including several senior field commanders, of the Jamiat-i-Islami faction were ambushed and killed in Takhar Province, 200 miles north of Kabul, where they had been attending a four-day strategy meeting. Sources indicate the murders were ordered by Sayad Jamal, a northern field commander associated with Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, leader of the ultra-radically fundamentalist and anti-Western Hezb-i-Islami. ☒

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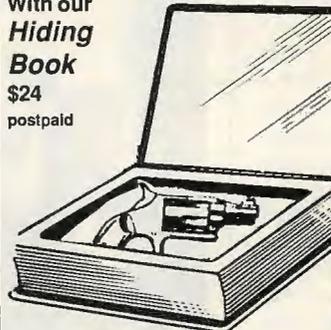
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“Y  
OU buy watch?”  
“What?”

The shoeless Vietnamese orphan, clad only in green, sunbleached baggy shorts, stood holding out the watch with a raised arm and mild annoyance aimed at me since I'd purposely missed most of his sales pitch. “I say, you buy watch. Good watch. You like,” he said again. A small brown hand perched on his brow, shielding the glare of the bright noon day sun.

“No, go away,” I said, trying to brush him off. In the village on my first day-pass I had more than a used watch on my mind.

At 12 years of age, having spent the last four on the streets of the dust-blown village, making his living shining boots and hustling, he wasn't about to be put off by some new guy who couldn't even find the whorehouse.

“What kine watch you have?” he demanded, grabbing hold of my arm for a quick inspection before throwing it back with registered disgust. “Timex, shit. Numbah ten. Bess watch is Seiko. Twenny dollah, you buy. Numbah one. You buy!” The boy held out the silver-banded watch again for my inspection.

“Here, you look!” he said, thrusting the watch into my hands. The face bore the Seiko name and a promise of 17 jewels. The crystal was slightly scratched and it was used to be sure, but it was, from all appearances, still a good buy.

“How much?” I asked, thinking that maybe like in Mexico I could talk the price down. However, what I didn't understand then was that the raggedy-ass, too-thin Vietnamese orphan was a *Bu Dois*, one of the street children who even their own country men described as “the Dust of Life” and as such never had known life without hardship or war. Hustling and prostitution was the way of life for the *Bu Dois*. And while my American childhood was spent in relative ease and comfort, the boy, whom I regarded with amusement, was a seasoned marketing professional. The war was simply a matter of business and there was more to his business than money. In Vietnam small businesses like his didn't go bankrupt. Instead, when they could no longer compete in the marketplace they crawled into urine-smelling corners of rat-infested back alleys and laid down and died.

“Twenty-five dollah. Numbah one watch. You like.”

“Whoa! Wait a minute, sport. I thought you said it was twenty dollars?”

“Then why you ask again?”

Staring at the street-wise kid, I laughed. “Fifteen dollars,” I said, countering his offer.

“Twenty-five dollah,” the boy held



# I WAS THERE

by Kregg Jorgenson

## Just Business



**Young boys get handouts of clothes and refreshments from Marines at Trung Son hamlet. Many youngsters like these were orphaned during the war and were forced to survive on the streets. Photo: DoD**

firm.

“Seventeen.”

“Shit, you boucoup dinky dow. You numbah-ten crazy. You new to Vietnam so you bring cheap Timex watch. Watch no lass. You no lass. Seiko good watch. GI with boucoup time need Seiko watch to lass. Twenny dollar.”

Embarrassed by the fact the boy knew I was a new arrival and since some of the vets in my unit did have Seiko watches, I decided to give in.

Besides, \$20 wasn't that much money anyway, and it was a Seiko.

“Okay, champ. You've got a deal,” I nodded while pulling out a \$20 military payment certificate from my wallet and handing it to the boy, who in turn, handed me the used watch.

“Steambath juss down the block. You can get laid there. Numbah one boom-boom,” the boy said, pointing me in the direction of the whorehouse. Then he was off at a quick pace while I stashed the watch in my pocket and ambled toward the steambath unaware that my bargain watch, minus the jewels and many of the inner workings, had already quit working.

It was nothing personal. It was just business. ☒

# Strange advice from the authors:

# BURN THIS BOOK

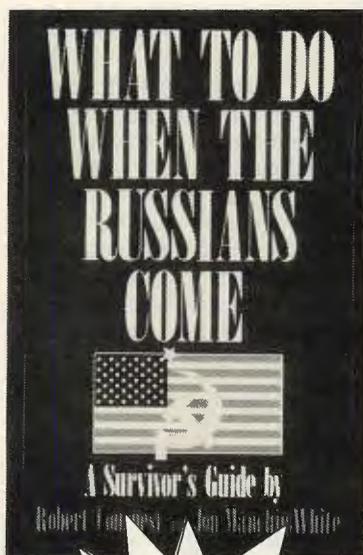
But that's only the beginning, if the peaceniks have their way and Russia ever does take over. The alternative might be to spend the rest of your days up near the Arctic Circle.

**Say, what's going on here? Has the Conservative Book Club suddenly started offering kooky books?**

Not on your life — and we use those words advisedly. This one is by Robert Conquest, who probably knows as much about the Soviets as any Westerner alive today. Conquest, now a senior research fellow at the Hoover Institution, wrote the classic study of Stalin's reign of murder, *The Great Terror*. Co-author Jon Manchip White is the Lindsay Young Professor of English at the University of Tennessee. So you'll be reading a serious book about a grim possibility. This isn't a 1984-style fantasy. *This book is based entirely upon what hundreds of millions have suffered when the Communists took over — but with ingenious variations added especially for America.*

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- ✓ Raising kids under the new regime.
- ✓ From the official Soviet list of people subject to repression in the Baltic states, some lessons.
- ✓ What will happen to your house. Your car. Things you take for granted now that you'll drool over then.
- ✓ The New America: 7 characteristics.
- ✓ Where the resistance activity will start. What it will have to do first. How the Communists will counter the freedom fighters. Where to learn about guerrilla warfare, and about *surviving*.

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## LANCERO ARTICLE RINGS TRUE...

Sirs:

I recently read your article on the Colombian Lancero School. I found it to be both accurate and to convey the spirit of the Lancero course. I attended the international Lancero Course in 1982 along with another U.S. Army officer and two officers from each of the countries of South and Central America. It proved to be extremely challenging and an excellent learning experience.

The author makes a point of comparing the student patrol's performance in the context of the U.S. Ranger School. I also found that the Lancero instructors preached almost straight Fort Benning but executed something that was a cross between a Boy Scout outing and a full-up combat raid. It was quickly brought home to me from both the U.S. Ranger liaison and the school commandant that the school is tailored to fight a specific enemy, Colombian guerrillas. Field experience is incorporated into the school curriculum continuously through instructor rotation and the use of the school cadre and students in *active guerrilla areas*.

Finally, let me say I enjoyed the article and only wish that the International course was still open to U.S. Army officers, as the Lancero school provided a unique opportunity to learn more about how our fellow Americans live and fight. *Lealtad, Valor, Sacrificio.*

Sean P. Maguire  
Columbus,  
Georgia



## FLAK

### CRIMINALS NEEDN'T REGISTER GUNS...

Sirs:

Many of the latest pack of gun control laws mandate registration of "assault" guns, supposedly to stop crime.

Who do the gun-banners think they are fooling?

The Supreme Court, in *Haynes vs. U.S.*, 309 U.S. 85, held that a person can't be compelled to register an illegally owned gun, for to do so is "self incrimination" barred by the Fifth Amendment.

Thus only legal gun-owners are bound by registration laws. Historically, the first step toward confiscation has been registration.

Gun registration laws are impotent against gun crime, and only serve to facilitate the seizure of legally owned guns.

Is that what we want?

Bill Burns  
Alexandria, Virginia



### THAT WAS NO BAZOOKA...

Sirs:

I was reading an article written by Jake Border in the October '88 SOF about the Tamil Tigers of Eelam. On page 31 is a small picture of an IPKF soldier on guard duty in Batticaloa, eastern Sri Lanka.

The author says the soldier indicated here is armed with a Bazooka. I disagree. I've used enough Carl Gustavs to recognize one. They're a great tank killer. To some of us they were affectionately known as "Carl get stuffed!" Otherwise I'd like to say the article was well written and for Jake to keep up the good work.

Philip Stubbs  
Trail, British Columbia

*You're right, the weapon shown is an M2 84mm Carl Gustav.*

## MUJAHIDEEN SHOULD RETURN TO ROOTS...

Sirs:

Mike Winchester observed of mujahideen operations at Jalalabad that "with more than 15,000 guerrillas camped out around the city, pinpoint precision (by government MiGs) was not a high priority" (see "Fury at Jalalabad," SOF, August '89). It was as if the mujahideen went out of their way to find a strength in Najibullah's situation and hurl themselves against it, with predictably disastrous results. Contrast this with David Bray's vivid description in the same issue (see "Prowling for POWs") of NVA strategy as like a supernatural animal which, when cornered, could "turn itself into molecules of gas, disperse, and reassemble elsewhere."

We cannot help but wonder why the mujahideen persisted when the advance stalled and their initial gains, obtained by using conventional tactics, could no longer be sustained. Will the mujahideen continue trying to adopt the patterns of their enemy, that is become conventional soldiers, or will they return, like Savimbi's UNITA (see "Angola's Ambush Alley," SOF, August '89), to their highly irregular, but highly successful, strategy?

Please keep up the only high-quality, unclassified coverage of military actions around the world that we defense contractors have ready access to.

Dr. Linda P. Beckerman  
Marietta, Georgia  
Dr. Chet Richards  
Atlanta, Georgia

*Thank you, doctors, for raising the point many seem to miss about this magazine.*

### PRESS OWES DEBT TO UNCLE SAM...

Sirs:

When I read the "What Price News Scoops" item in the Bulletin Board section of the July '89 issue it reminded me of listening to a local radio talk show commentator vent her spleen on the air after reading a tidbit in the newspaper on the same subject.

In fairness to Mr. Jennings, he started the exchange opting for warning the U.S. troops [of an enemy attack] and maintained that position through most of the conversation. Only after repeatedly being "sighted down the long trough" of Mike Wallace's nose and,



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as you mentioned, some soul searching (can this term apply to the news media?) did he relent. If my memory serves me correctly, later he went back to his original statement. I came away with at least a little respect for Peter.

Unfortunately your quote of the Marine colonel does not do justice to the scene of him brimming with anger at Mr. Wallace and the news media in general. And I think even Mike Wallace got the point, witnessed by his silence and indecision in the end. The point: free press the world over "owes" its ability to do its job to our democratic republic and the men and women who defend it. The communist dictatorships would have liquidated Mike and Peter long ago.

As much as the journalists would like to stand aloof from the rest of their species, they owe a debt that can never be paid in full.

Steve Byrne  
Union, Kentucky

*If an American journalist accompanying enemy troops about to attack U.S. forces sees some ethical dilemma in warning the U.S. troops about the attack, then we strongly suggest — for their own safety — they find some other line of work. U.S. troops would take a dim view of anyone who let their buddies die, and who couldn't decide if he/she were an American — or a journalist — first.*

## WANTS FACTS ON MOTLEY...

Sirs:

I read in *Stars and Stripes* today about the death of *Soldier of Fortune* writer Lance Motley. I was wondering if there would be a memorial issue for this man. It's a bitch to think that a man died in order to write the kind of article that I like to read in SOF. Is there an address to send contributions to his family?

Vincent A. Filpi III  
Incirlik AFB, Turkey

*Lance Eugene Motley, who wrote for SOF under the nom de plume Gene Scoft, died in Mae Sot, Thailand, on 31 May of wounds received while covering the Karen rebels in Burma. French journalist Alain Haas was there at the time, and his story of what happened begins on page 52 of this issue. Contributions to Lance's family can be sent care of Soldier of Fortune.*

## WORSE THAN HAM AND MAMMIES...

Sirs:

I thoroughly enjoyed the nostalgic, if somewhat harsh, trip down memory lane presented by Mr. Bryan's article "Farewell Ham and Mammies" (SOF, Aug. '89). In spite of the presentation, some of the Cs were edible. I was disappointed, however, that Mr. Bryan failed to mention the uncontested, most massive insult to the digestive system

ever devised, Ham and Eggs with a B-2 unit. As soon as the P-38 broke the seal of the can, you knew the contents were not edible. I don't know of anyone who completely opened a can and viewed the green mess inside who then ate it. No amount of Tabasco could make it edible.

A parting thought. With all the media-generated hysteria concerning firearms and their misuse, isn't it time someone in a position to do something about it proposed mandatory firearm education in public schools, while the kids are still kids? It would increase the child's understanding of the dangers involved and reduce the number of accidents. I'm sure a lot of accidental shootings are the result of the child not knowing even how to check and see if the gun is loaded.

Chuck Thompson  
Manassas, Virginia

## RESPECT FOR THE DEAD...

Sirs:

I just read in SOF where some Englishmen recovered part of the remains of a World War II P-38 pilot from the crash site where he went in. Seems they were told by the Americans they contacted to put the remains back in the hole where they got them and cover them up.

This seem to me to be kind of gross.

Do you know if there were some words spoken over the grave (burial spot) by the people there? So part of the body was sent home during World War II; does that justify treating the rest of the body like butcher waste?

When I was with the U.S. Army at Verdun, France, in the '60s, we were building an ammo dump on the high ridge north of the town. When we dug up the remains of World War I soldiers, they were recovered by the French and buried in a memorial built for that purpose near the town of Etain. Beats the hell out of being treated like a dog that's been run over on the road.

David M. Hayden  
USA/USAF RET.  
Wichita, Kansas

## BLACKS OPPOSE SANCTIONS...

Sirs:

Our country is made out to be the most fervent violator of human rights in the world, and I think it's time a South African sets the record straight.

Sergeant Chinal, where do you get your facts from? How many black South Africans have you spoken to who want sanctions? Definitely not many. A recent poll among blacks shows that 80 per cent of them oppose sanctions. I would also love to see where you saw our defense force condoning off whole city blocks to search the inhabitants. Believe it or not, you also need a search warrant in South Africa. So please get your facts right and don't judge events from your "window."

Lastly, sergeant, you say you believe in terror to eradicate apartheid. Have you ever been involved in a terror attack? I know what it's like, and if you ask any person, black or white, who has felt the sting of terror how useful they believe it is, be prepared to have a flood of abuse sent toward you.

Oh, by the way, for every one white killed or injured in a bomb blast, there are 10 blacks dead or injured. I despise apartheid, and trust me, this country is changing. Instead of trying to destroy us, why doesn't America help us build?

Garreth Elston  
Krugersdorp, Transvaal  
Republic of South Africa

*We received a number of replies in response to Marine Sergeant J.J. Chinal's letter (Flak, April '89), of which the above is representative. Violence, from either side of the apartheid fence, will not solve South Africa's problems. Period. Economic and political sanctions will not dismantle apartheid. Period. U.S. support of moderate black, white and mixed-race factions, and the willingness to support U.S. businesses that will treat fairly all South African workers, is a strong step in the right direction.*

**STOP THE  
GUN GRAB  
OF '89**

Continued on page 87

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**A**FTER patrolling for most of the day in the hot sun, the Salvadoran army platoon stops to rest on a small hill. It's not easy patrolling in Morazan Province — never was and never will be. Hot, tired and hungry, the platoon commander, Lieutenant Morales, a Mustang, looks forward to a well-needed rest. Setting out his squads in mutually supporting defense, the lieutenant ensures there are no gaps in his fire plan. Good thing, too, because no sooner does he finish than a PG-7 rocket slams into his position, followed by intense small-arms fire from another hillock about 300 meters away.

Returning fire immediately and without orders, the platoon tries to gain fire superiority. Receiving more rockets and now a sprinkling of 60mm mortar rounds, the men instinctively turn up the volume of fire. Lieutenant Morales desperately tries to gain control of the fire-fight by issuing a fire control order. Order is restored and his unit now starts shooting more effectively.

The guerrillas begin to move forward, and at 300 meters they look like mere ants in the sights of the Salvadoran soldiers. Aiming as carefully as possible, Morales' men try to snipe at the enemy to drive him back. Moments later, the enemy is 150 meters away and once again everyone turns up the volume. This time the soldiers shoot at the enemy as he darts between trees or rocks with two quick shots, or "double tap." Still in the assault, the enemy is now at 75 meters and the platoon must shoot faster or be overrun. Finally, at 50 meters, some soldiers flip to automatic, as it's getting to crunch time.

The enemy cannot stand up to the high volume of effective fire for that length of time and have to beat feet out of the area. Lieutenant Morales gives a sigh of relief.

Why did the army patrol win this one? What forced the enemy to withdraw? The answer lies in the proper application of what is called rates of fire. The army patrol used the correct volume of fire for the distance between it and the enemy. As that distance changed, so did their rate of fire.

Each distance and situation has its appropriate rate of fire and it is essential that it be used. Now, just what are the rates of fire?

- Deliberate — five rounds per minute.
- Snap Shooting — two rounds per target exposure.
- Rapid Fire — 20 rounds per minute.
- Intense — 30 rounds per minute.
- Full Auto — short bursts of three to five rounds, or long bursts of eight to 10 rounds.

**Deliberate fire** — Five rounds per minute, or less. As the name implies, this is accurate, carefully aimed shoot-



# COMBAT WEAPONCRAFT

by Jack Thompson

## Combat Fire Control



**ABOVE:** Marine riflemen of the 9th Marine Regiment add deliberate fire from their M16A1 rifles to firepower of M48A3 tank as they engage dug-in NVA unit north of Dong Ha, Vietnam in the spring of 1968. Accurate, effective shooting using the correct rate of fire will help these Marines live to fight again. Photo: Cpl. J. McCullough, USMC



**LEFT:** Salvo troopers with SOF training team in 1984 learn the importance of applying appropriate rates of fire. Photo: Phil Foley

ing. A soldier uses deliberate fire when 1) the target is at long range; 2) the target is small; or 3) when the target is indistinct. Sniper fire is deliberate fire. Any time you need a precise shot or need to shoot at long range (300 meters or more), deliberate fire should be used. It is appropriate to mention what deliberate fire is *not*. It is not just shooting for the sake of making noise or just for the hell of it or hoping to get lucky. Nobody is killed by noise or bullets that miss! The bullet that is launched with precision and with the intent to strike someone is shot using deliberate fire.

When the target is small, as in a head shot, you use deliberate fire because a

head shot is the same as a body shot at three times the range. For example: A head shot at 100 meters would be the same as a body shot at 300 meters, and deliberate fire is definitely called for.

At indistinct targets (such as bushes, scrub, muzzle flashes and smoke) the reason for using deliberate fire is simple. The soldier must try to hit an unseen enemy by expending as little ammunition as possible. Sometimes this technique is referred to as reconnaissance by fire, trying to find the enemy by firing at likely hiding places. However, what you don't want is to locate him only to find out that you just shot off all your ammunition in the search process. Shooting off all your ammo aimlessly will get you a speeding ticket under the law of natural selection — the fine being pretty stiff.

**Snap-Shooting** — Two rounds per exposure of the enemy. Snap

shooting is the type of fire used when the exposure of the enemy is of short duration. During this exposure, the soldier will shoot two quick aimed shots. The reason we shoot two shots is that it increases the hit probability over one shot, but three shots will usually take too long. Snap shooting is probably the most important skill a soldier can possess in guerrilla war. Sudden and intense engagements of short duration, followed by hasty retreats — this kind of warfare places a premium on snap-shooting skills.

**Rapid Fire** — 20 rounds per minute. When faced with an assault while in the defense, or to gain fire superiority in the attack, rapid fire is the rate of fire most commonly used. The emphasis here is on *quick, accurate fire*. You might say that 20 rounds per minute are not many rounds, but remember that you're a member of a group and the others are also firing at the same rate. Group rapid fire is highly effective out to 300 meters, especially when coordinated with fire control orders, to the point that six men shooting rapid fire are equal to a machine gun at that range.

**Intense Rate of Fire** — 30 rounds a minute. Now, when you come under rapid fire, how do you gain fire superiority in that situation? Intense fire. Intense fire is firing as soon as you aim at a target, and continuing to shoot at likely targets at about one round every two seconds. A cadence of aim-fire-aim-fire-aim-fire, etc., will ensure that your fire can be both controlled (thus effective) and fast.

Effective intense fire is the law of natural selection in action because the slow-footed or the hesitant usually get quickly wiped out under its application. One interesting point here is that, because of their heavier recoil, maintaining intense fire with 7.62mm caliber weapons is more difficult than with 5.56mm caliber weapons.

**Full Auto** — Full-auto fire is using your battle rifle as a machine gun — *not* its primary function. Many a soldier has gone to his reward before his time with magazines empty and weapon silent after erroneously thinking that full auto is the ticket out of hell. Full auto, however, does have limited applications which deserve mention: clearing buildings and vehicle anti-ambush. When inside buildings, use short bursts of three to five rounds. When engaging short-range targets, it is important not to use long bursts to prevent running dry too soon. When responding to vehicle ambushes, a high volume of fire is called for and you must use long bursts of eight to 10 rounds (along with every one else!) to seize the initiative from the bad guys. This high volume of

Continued on page 77

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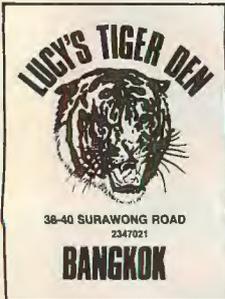
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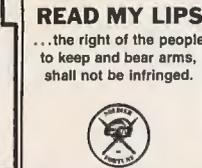
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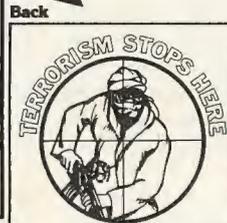
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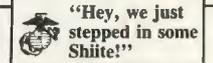
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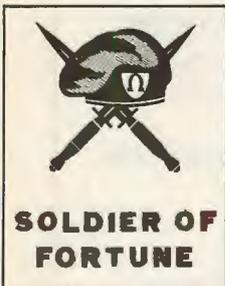
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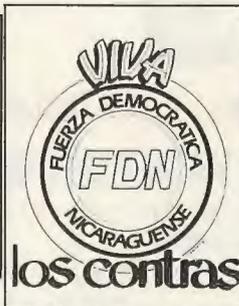
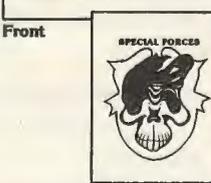
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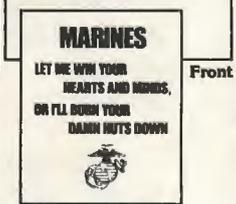
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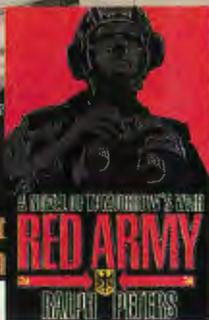
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*Southern  
Africa within  
the African  
Revolutionary  
context*



Edited by  
**AL J. VENTER**

**CHALLENGE**



Each week scores of books cross our desk, and it's a tough choice to pick the two or three we review each month. We try to pick those books that will appeal not only to the SOF readership as a whole, but to differing interests within the readership as well.

There are some books, however, that deserve mention even if we weren't able to give them a full review. Some are new; some are classics worth reading (or re-reading); some are fiction and some non-fiction. We polled the editorial staff for their choices of "books too good to miss," and this month's *In Review* represents their selections.

**A BIOGRAPHY OF AUDIE MURPHY.** Don Graham. Viking. World War II's most decorated soldier, from start to finish.

**AND THE RUSSIANS STAYED — THE SOVIETIZATION OF CUBA.** Nestor T. Carbonell. William Morrow & Company. First-person account of the 30 years under Castro.

**ASSAULT FROM THE SKY.** John Weeks. Sterling Publishing. History of airborne warfare, from 1940 Germany through the 1980s. And, **UNITED STATES AIRBORNE FORCES.** Leroy Thompson. Blandford Press.

**ASSAULT ON THE LIBERTY.** James M. Ennes, Jr. Ivy Books. The true story of an Israeli attack on the American intelligence-gathering ship, USS *Liberty*.

**BATTLE CRY OF FREEDOM.** James M. McPherson. Ballantine Books. Covers political, social, economic, and military conditions before and during the U.S. Civil War.

**CHALLENGE — SOUTHERN AFRICA WITHIN THE AFRICAN REVOLUTIONARY CONTEXT.** Edited by Al J. Venter. Ashanti Press. Compendium of essays by top Africa specialists.

**CHICKENHAWK.** Robert Mason. Penguin Books. Personal account by a chopper pilot who flew slicks in 'Nam.

**DESERT WARFARE.** Bryan Perrett. Sterling Publishing. War in the sands from the Romans to the Gulf Conflict.

**EAGLES CRY BLOOD.** Donald E. Zlotnik. Zebra Books. Fiction account of Special Forces in Vietnam.

**HITLER — THE VICTORY THAT NEARLY WAS.** Bruce Quarrie. Sterling Publishing. A historian and war-gamer asks "what if" of a war that could have gone either way.

**HOSTAGE ONE.** David Fisher and Ralph Albertazzie. Random House. Could Khadaffi kidnap President Bush? This fiction thriller makes the scenario plausible.

**INSIDE THE LRRPS — RANGERS IN VIETNAM.** Michael Lee Lanning. Ivy Books. Traces U.S. Army Ranger history with a look at operations during the Vietnam war. Also, Lanning's **THE ONLY WAR WE HAD** and **VIETNAM 1969-1970: A COMPANY COMMANDER'S JOURNAL**.

**IRON BOTTOM SOUND.** Lindsay Baly. Walker & Company. Royal Navy officer serves as an observer to U.S. Naval forces during the World War II Guadalcanal campaign in this historical fiction work.

**JUNGLETRACKS.** Ralph Zumbro and James Walker. Pocket Books. Vietnam sets the stage for this fiction work about U.S. armor fighting the Viet Cong and North Vietnamese Army.

**KEEP THE LAST BULLET FOR YOURSELF — THE TRUE STORY OF CUSTER'S LAST STAND.** Thomas B. Marquis. Reference Publications Inc. Completed in 1934, the book's thesis that the bulk of Custer's command committed suicide at the Little Big Horn was so controversial that it was only published in the last decade.

**KINGS OF COCAINE.** Guy Gugliotta and Jeff Leen. Simon & Schuster. Inside the Medellin Cartel — a true story of murder, money, and international corruption.

**MIKE FORCE.** LTC L.H. "Bucky" Burruss. Pocket Books. First-hand account of Special Forces and their Montagnards who acted as the SF quick-reaction force.

**MISSING BY CHOICE.** Roger Victor. Tor Books. Expat American merc in Bangkok gets tied up with MIAs and drug wars in this fiction work.

**MUD SOLDIERS.** George C. Wilson. Charles Scribner's Sons. How good is today's Army? Wilson follows the cycle from basic training to unit assignment.

**NO GREATER LOVE.** James C. Donahue. Daring Books. One day in the life of a Special Forces medic as they hit VC and Main Force units.

**PAGE AFTER PAGE.** Tim Page. Sidgwick & Jackson Ltd. Memoir of the far-out world of combat photographers in Vietnam by one of the legends.

**PICKETT'S CHARGE.** George R. Stewart. Morningside House Inc. Ex-

amination of the motivations behind the charge; strategy, tactics, weapons; and controversies after the battle of Gettysburg.

**RED ARMY.** Ralph Peters. Pocket Books. Fictional look at the next war in Europe from the Soviet side.

**SHARPE'S REVENGE.** Bernard Cornwell. Penguin Books. Historical fiction covering the career of Major Richard Sharpe, 95th Rifles, in Wellington's 1809-14 campaign in Spain, Portugal and France. Tenth in the series.

**SON OF THE MORNING STAR.** Evan S. Connell. Harper & Row. George Armstrong Custer, from start to finish.

**STRIKER ONE DOWN.** James N. Pruitt. Tor Books. Fiction-based-on-fact look at SOG recon team missions in Vietnam.

**SUBMARINE COMMANDER.** Paul R. Schratz. The University Press of Kentucky. U.S. sub commander during World War II in the Pacific, and later off Korea.

**SWORD POINT.** Harold Coyle. Simon & Schuster. United States and the Soviet Union punch it up in Iran. Also, **TEAM YANKEE** (Presidio Press), his first novel about a U.S. — USSR war.

**THE ART OF WAR.** Sun Tzu. Oxford University Press. Fifth century B.C. work that set forth the strategy behind virtually every successful guerrilla campaign since.

**THE OTHER NUREMBERG — THE UNTOLD STORY OF THE TOKYO WAR CRIMES TRIALS.** Arnold C. Brackman. William Morrow & Company. First-person account of the post-war trials and punishment for the other Axis war criminals.

**THE PRINCE.** Niccolo Machiavelli. Penguin. Classic work on the principles of political hardball that underlie every successful government.

**THE RAIDERS.** Richard Garrett. Sterling Publishing. Short history of commandos, from 15th century B.C. to Entebbe.

**THE TRUE BELIEVER.** Eric Hoffer. Harper and Row. Dissects the psychology, character and motivations of the fanatic, be he communist, fascist or religious.

Continued on page 78

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Man has long sought to make sea water drinkable. Early success was achieved through distillation and complex machinery. This type of purification isn't appropriate for the average boat or yacht however, and only in the last decade have desalinators come into reach of ordinary budgets.

Introducing Survivor-35, the only hand-operated desalinator of its kind in the world. It's capable of producing 1.4 gallons per hour of potable water from ocean, brackish or contaminated sources. Survivor-35 measures only 22 inches in length and weighs just 7 pounds.

The unique process used was developed to meet the needs of the U.S. Navy but is now available for civilian purchase. Unlike a still, Survivor-35 is U.S. Coast Guard approved. For \$1295 a pop you can remove 98 percent of salt as well as bacteria and viruses from ocean water. If your next trip involves that two-thirds of our planet covered by salt water you may want to look into Survivor-35. A smaller and less expensive Survivor-06 is available for \$525.

Contact Recovery Engineering Inc., Dept. SOF, 1204 Chestnut Ave., Minneapolis, MN 55403; phone 1-800-548-0406.



## RUSSELL UP A CAMP KNIFE

A.G. Russell's knives are known to most aficionados and his reputation for service and quality precede him. Consequently it's always a pleasure to introduce one of his new products.

Seeing an unfilled need for a large sturdy knife that's equally at home cutting poles for a shelter or taking down a grizzly, A.G. Russell decided to produce Blackie Collins' Combat Master.

Combat Master has a 7.5-inch

# ADVENTURE QUARTERMASTER

by Tom Slizewski



## GLOCK GETS SCOPED

Up until now if you wanted to mount a sight on your Glock pistol you had a problem because, short of custom work, it couldn't be done. Along comes Aimtech Mount Systems with a solution.

Their new lightweight mount system allows installation of scopes as well as electronic and laser sights on Glock Model 17, 17L and 19 pistols. It should take less than three minutes to install and requires no drilling. Using a saddle design the mount drops over the top of the slide and two legs line up with the

trigger pin and grip filler pin, which are now both replaced by two custom screws supplied with the mount (see photo).

They're made of a heat treated aluminum alloy and certainly seem durable. If you're looking for increased accuracy out of your Glock with little sacrifice in comfort, Aimtech mounts are for you. Price is \$59.95 direct from the company and they accept major credit cards or will ship COD.

Contact Aimtech Mount Systems, Dept. SOF, PO Box 223, Thomasville, GA 31799; phone (912) 226-4313

stainless steel, 57-59 Rockwell blade and a 5-inch Zytel-and-fiberglass handle. The blade is bead blasted to give it a soft, rugged finish that won't reflect light. The handle features a 3.5-inch removable tab that gives you limited storage space for fish hooks, snare line or whatever you deem necessary.



Many times these little nooks detract from the function of a knife but I'm glad to say in this case the storage area compliments the blade and in no way detracts from its function.

Many companies with such an obvious winner on their hands would have fleeced the consumer for \$150-200, but not A. G. Russell. The Combat Master, complete with leather sheath is a mere \$89.97 (plus \$3 shipping). For under \$100, I think this is the best knife you can buy today. If you don't like it, for any reason, there's a 100 percent money-back guarantee. He even has a toll-free number. Buy this knife.

Contact A.G. Russell, Dept. SOF, 1705 Highway 71 North, Springdale, AR 72764-2397; phone 1-800-255-9034



# Every time I meet a Yank he wants to buy my bloody hat!

New York. Dallas. LA. There's no rest, mate. Everywhere I travel, the moment some Yank sees my bloody hat he wants to buy it.

Do I sell it? Course not. My hat's an old clobber — it's been with me since I was in the ANZACs.

But I do know an opportunity when I see one, mate. So because you Yanks like them so much, I've brought a bunch of these hats over here for you. And there's more on the way.

They're the real thing, fair dinkum. Made in Australia to regulation army standards. So you can bet they won't wear out in a hurry.

Only one colour: authentic Aussie army green. But there's all different sizes, so you and your old girl can both get one.

Guaranteed? Of course. And all you have to do to order yours is fill in this coupon and post it. I reckon it's a dam sight better than trying to buy the hat off my bloody head!

## The drama of the *Slouch* or Digger hat.

This was the talk of the Australian military in 1885. Colonel Price had outfitted his volunteer battalion — the Victorian Mounted Rifles — with brand new headgear, with an upturned brim.

They called it the "slouch" hat. Within five years it was standard issue to all Australian troops. The world first noted it, briefly, in the flickering newsreels of 1914. And then again, emblazoned across its movie screens during World War 2.

We developed an affection for those lanky, laconic Aussie "diggers." You'd know them anywhere, in their signature field green slouch hats, with the upturned brim.

These are known as "Digger" hats now. And they're worn outside the Australian and New Zealand forces, as a fashion item.

- Each hat is made of finest wool felt, selected for its quality and durability.
- Adjustable chinstraps are pure leather, individually hand-sewn with a looping overstitch.
- The hatband, called a *puggaree*, is intricately hand-sewn from no fewer than seven lengths of ribbon.

## TWO YEAR GUARANTEE

Your Genuine Australian Digger Hat is fully guaranteed against defects in workmanship or materials for two years from date of purchase. If faulty, simply return it for replacement. This does not cover normal wear and tear.

During the first 90 days, if for any reason (or no reason at all) you decide that the Digger Hat is not for you, you can return it for a full refund.



*Digger McLean*  
P.S. Allow four to six weeks for delivery.



Aussies wear their armed forces insignia on the Digger hat's upturned brim. You can, too. Authentic military badge measures 2 1/2" x 1 1/4" with polished bronze plating.

- Individual hats are priced at **\$69<sup>95</sup>**
- Pairs (same or mixed sizes) are **\$124<sup>50</sup>**  
a saving of **\$15.40**
- Armed forces insignia **\$7<sup>95</sup>**  
**Buy two hats, get TWO insignia FREE!**

**Complete and mail** this coupon with payment to: A.U.S.T. Corp. (Australia & US Trading Corporation), Dept. SF2, P.O. Box 2017, Chandler, AZ 85224.

- YES!** Please send me the following **Digger** hats, at \$69.95 each, or \$124.50 for two, plus shipping and handling. \_\_\_\_\_ (qty) Small - 6 5/8" \_\_\_\_\_ (qty) Large - 7 1/8" \_\_\_\_\_ (qty) Medium - 6 7/8" \_\_\_\_\_ (qty) X-Large - 7 3/8"
  - With my hat, please send me one Australian Armed Forces insignia, at \$7.95. (Buy two hats, receive two insignia **FREE!**)
  - Please **pre-shape** my Digger hats for me: \$5.00 per hat.
- SHIPPING & HANDLING: Please add \$6.50 for each hat; shipped separately.
- My check/money order for \$ \_\_\_\_\_ is enclosed.
  - Please charge my  VISA  MasterCard  American Express

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**Items on Left (Clockwise from top.)**

- #5007 Urban Recon 6-pack carrier, grey. This insulated pack keeps beverages cold. (Not for use with ice.) **\$9.95**
- #7090 SOF Can Wrap, black with white logo. **\$4.95**
- #7070 SOF Coffee Mug, white with red logo. **\$5.95**
- #7050 SOF Luggage Tag, white with black logo. **\$4.95**
- #7110 SOF Ashtray, white with red logo. **\$5.95**
- #7100 Shot Glass. 4-oz., clear with red logo. **\$4.95**
- #7120 Stein. 12-oz., clear with red logo. **\$7.50**



**Badges (By vertical rows, from left)**

- #7005 SOF Key Ring **\$5.25**
- #7024 Beret Badge, black **\$8.00**
- #7023 Beret Badge, silver **\$8.00**
- #7021 SOF Lapel Pin, silver **\$5.95**
- #7043 SOF Lapel Pin, gold **\$5.95**
- #7020 SOF Lapel Pin, red **\$3.50**
- #7022 Beret Badge, red **\$7.00**
- #7053 Death to Tyrants Badge **\$5.95**



**Patches (From left to right)**

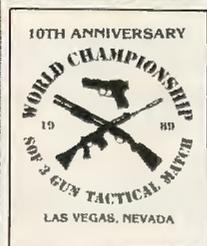
- #7003 Shield Patch **\$4.95**
- #7002 SOF Round Patch, OD **\$2.50**
- #7001 SOF Round Patch, red **\$2.50**
- #7060 SOF Patch, black **\$4.95**

**Items on Right (Clockwise from left.)**

- #5005 SOF Duffle Bag. Black, large. **\$24.95**
- #2004 Black SOF Ball Cap with scrambled eggs. **\$9.95**
- #2001 Maroon Beret. Sizes 6 1/2 - 7 3/4. (Beret badge not included.) **\$14.95**
- #5006 SOF Duffle Bag. Grey, large. **\$24.95**
- #7014 Web Belt, black. (Buckle not included.) **\$3.50**
- #7012 SOF Silver Military Buckle (Shown on belt.) **\$11.95**  
(Also available in black. #7013 **\$11.95**)
- #7010 SOF Pewter Belt Buckle. **\$7.95**
- #2021 White SOF Ball Cap with Oak Leaf Cluster. **\$9.95**  
(Also available in grey. #2020 **\$9.95**)
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- #7161 Soldier of Fortune Watch. Clean design with red logo and black, waterproof band. 1-year warranty. **\$29.95**



T-shirts come in S,M,L,XL,XXL \$1.00 extra.



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- #9289 1989 SOF Match T-shirt, white, **\$9.95** (Tank top is available. Size L only. #9389 **\$7.95**)



- #1001 SOF Logo T-shirt, black, **\$9.95**



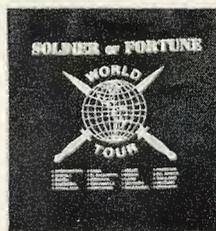
- #1028 MACSOG T-shirt, black, **\$10.95**



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- #1025 Lucy's Tiger Den T-shirt, white, **\$12.95**



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“I never send my staff places I won't go myself, and I'd never sell you equipment I wouldn't use!”

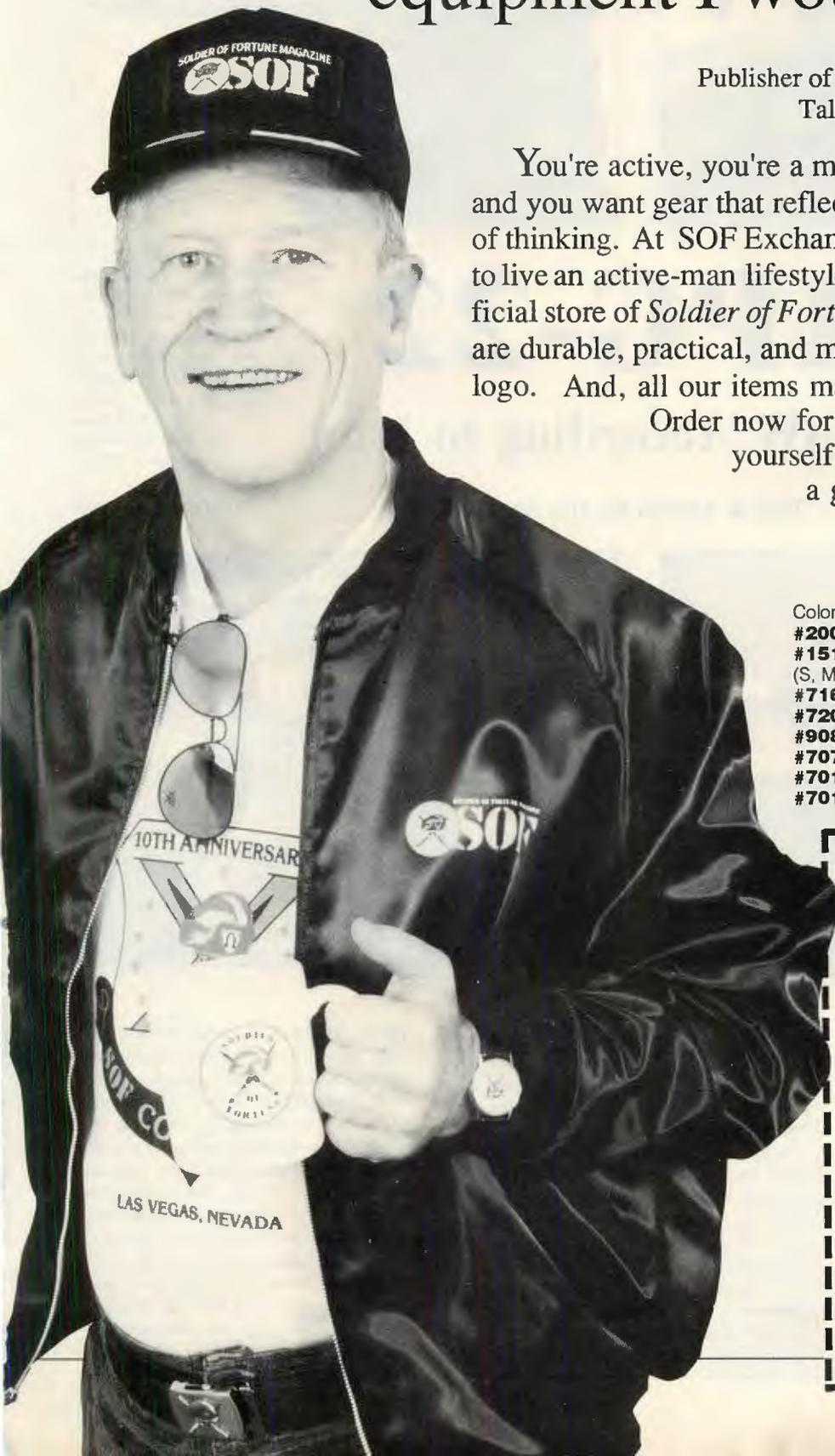
Col. Robert K. Brown

Publisher of *Soldier of Fortune* Magazine

Talking about his SOF Exchange

You're active, you're a man who is true to himself, and you want gear that reflects your independent way of thinking. At SOF Exchange, we know what it takes to live an active-man lifestyle. SOF Exchange is the official store of *Soldier of Fortune* Magazine. Our items are durable, practical, and most carry the official SOF logo. And, all our items make great Christmas Gifts!

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Colonel Brown is wearing:

- #2004 Black SOF Hat, **\$9.95**
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- #7160 Omega Group Watch **\$29.95**
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ABOVE: At the Oka River training area near Ryazan, Soviet Union, a soldier of the Soviet Airborne Forces (VDV) sights an RPG-22. He wears new Soviet "elite unit" winter camouflage.

ABOVE: RPG-7D (break-down version of the RPD-7) is still the favorite anti-armor weapon of the VDV (airborne) and VSN (Spetsnaz) troops as it is reusable, and each trooper can carry one or two rounds — still lighter than the same number of disposable RPGs.

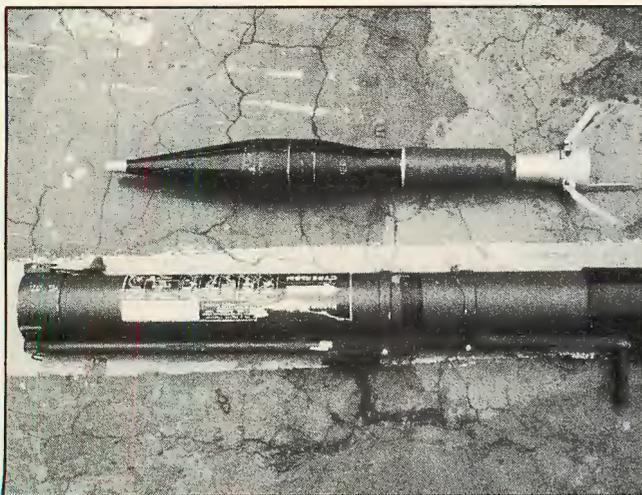
# RPG-22

## The LAW According to Ivan

Text & Photos by Jim Shortt

BELOW: RPG-22 and its warhead.

BELOW: Author with RPG-18.



**T**HE *Ruchnoy Proteevo-tankoviy Granomyot* (RPG) or Light Anti-tank Grenade Launcher 22 is the most recently developed antitank weapon in the Soviet armory. This 72mm weapon appeared in Afghanistan for the first time approximately five years ago. Issue is primarily to Motor Rifle Troops rather than airborne and elite units. The VDV (*Vodushno-Desantny-Voiska* — air assault forces) and VSN (*Voiska Spetsial-nobo-Naznachania* — Spetsnaz or special purpose forces) still prefer the older RPG-7D air assault series.

The Soviet Union first developed the RPG-2 from a prototype RPG-1, developed in turn from the World War II German Pan-

### SHORTT REPORTS

Englishman Jim Shortt, a frequent contributor to *Soldier of Fortune*, writes most frequently about special operations forces in Europe. Recent articles for SOF have covered the Irish *fianogloch* ("Irish Rangers," January '89), the Austrian *Jagdkommando* ("Snake Eaters," September '87), 22 SAS ("Seven Years for Eleven Minutes," December '87) and the Swedish Rangers ("Rebuffing the Bear," December '87). A photo article on the Soviet Airborne School is in the works for a future issue of SOF.

zerfaust. The RPG-2, now obsolete with Soviet forces, was a 40mm reusable tube from which was fired an 82mm warheaded rocket. The RPG-7V was an improvement on the "2" series, adding a conical rear blast shield and an additional pistol grip. An optional telescopic (PR07) or infra-red (NS02) sight was added. The caliber of the tube remained the same, but the rocket warhead increased in size to 85mm. The RPG-7D is an air assault version which screws apart mid-section to enable easy carry. In an attempt to update and increase effectiveness, the Soviet Union next introduced the RPG-16 to replace the "7" series. With a HEAT (High Explosive Anti-Tank) war-



ABOVE: Coach's view when firing RPG-22.

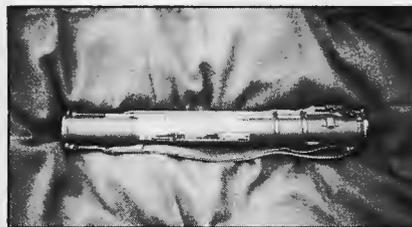


ABOVE: Instructions in illustrated Cyrillic appear on label, left side of weapon.

BELOW: Front sight is graduated from 50 to 250 meters.



BELOW: Predecessor to the RPG-22, the RPG-18 was photographed by author in Afghanistan. It was obsolesced early on due to the difficulty of closing it once it had been opened.



BELOW: Temperature adjustment must be made prior to firing; note + and - settings for above and below freezing.



BELOW: Temperature-adjustment assembly and firing guard are lifted to expose the firing lever (arrow).



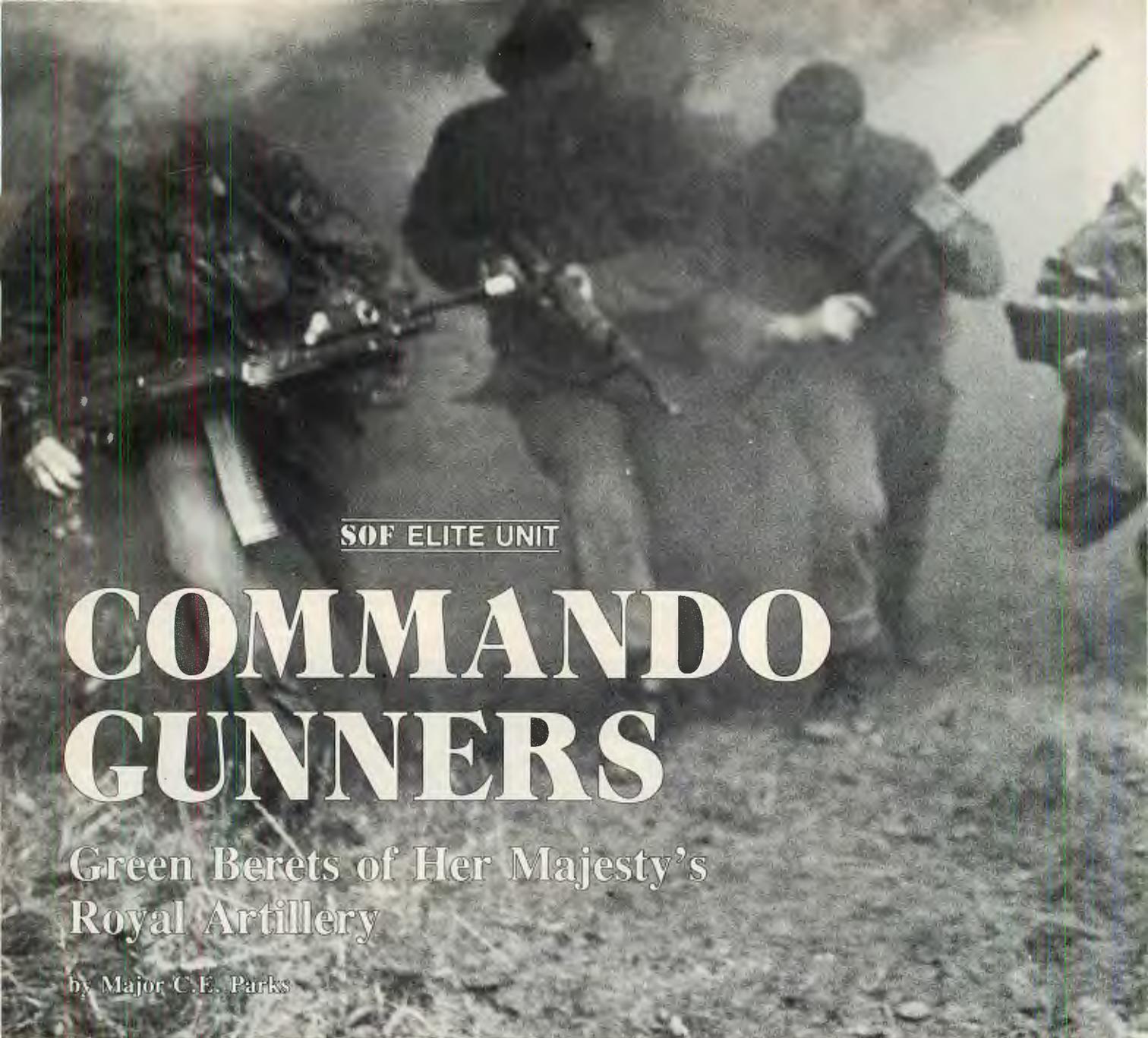
head of 85mm, this rocket had a penetration of 360mm and a range of 400-500 meters (as compared to 320mm and 300-500 meters respectively for the "7" series).

The early 1980s saw a departure from the standard reusable RPG, with Soviet armed forces introducing a disposable RPG, the 18 series, based on the U.S. M72 series 66mm LAW (Light Anti-tank Weapon). LAWs captured in Vietnam provided the workable prototype. The result was a 63mm disposable rocket launcher with 360mm penetration and a range of 130-200 meters. Closed, the tube was .5 meters long, telescoping open to one meter. The major problem with the RPG-18 was that it was truly a one-time

weapon. Should the gunner fail to find a target, it was virtually impossible to close the weapon as one can with the M72, due to a peculiar curved retaining bolt on the left side of the tube. It was this that probably initiated the search for a replacement so soon after its introduction.

Developed in turn from the RPG-18, the RPG-22 is a disposable LAW with a range of up to 250 meters, which has a penetration of 390-400mm. It is a 72mm caliber weapon with a rocket .5 meters long — slightly shorter than the closed tube. The RPG-22 consists of a glass-fiber reinforced synthetic tube with an aluminum inner sleeve. It is opened by pulling the black plastic foresight

sleeve forward. This erects the front and rear sights. The front sight is graduated from 50-250 meters. In the closed position, the rear sight covers the firing lever. Before opening, the soldier adjusts the +/- control on the sight for temperatures above (+) or below (-) 0 degrees Centigrade. Pictorial instructions for firing are contained on a decal on the left side of the tube. These instructions advise a rear safety zone of 30 meters and a total safety arc of 90 degrees. (The author wishes to acknowledge the cooperation of the Soviet armed forces and to extend his thanks particularly to the commandant and staff of the Ryazan Higher Airborne Academy.)



SOF ELITE UNIT

# COMMANDO GUNNERS

Green Berets of Her Majesty's  
Royal Artillery

by Major C.E. Parks

**I**F the Founding Fathers had looked up as they set sail from England in the *Mayflower*, they would have seen against the sky the looming bulk of the Royal Citadel of *Plymouth*. The Citadel still stands guard over the "Mayflower Steps," a favorite place of pilgrimage for American tourists. Today it is the home of 29 Commando Regiment Royal Artillery.

## ON TARGET

Major C.E. Parks, a former officer in the Royal Horse Artillery, has seen a variety of active service around the world and is a frequent contributor to *Soldier of Fortune* Magazine.

A team from 148 Battery prepare to "float off" a Royal Navy submarine. Photo: Gunner Davies, 29 Commando Regiment





**LEFT:** Section attacks through the smoke on the Commando course. Gunners, sappers and ordnance personnel are all expected to be proficient at infantry tactics. Photo: Commando Forces News Team

**BELOW:** A long way down. Rifle on his back and bergan slung below his buttocks, a Commando Gunner begins a practice abseil descent during mountain training in Scotland. Photo: Gunner Davies, 29 Commando Regiment



29 Commando Regiment comes under operational command of the Royal Marine's 3rd Commando Brigade. Two of its gun batteries, 8 (Alma) and 79 (Kirkee), are stationed at Plymouth supporting 40 and 42 Commandos. The 7 (Sphinx) Battery lives in the north of Scotland at Arbroath, from where it supports 45 Commando. There is also a Territorial (part-time) Battery, 289, which is based in London. These batteries are all equipped with the excellent 105mm light gun which gave such outstanding service in the Falklands war.

Also under command of the Regiment is 148 (Meiktila) Battery. A unique formation, without guns of its own, it provides Naval Gunfire Support Teams whose duties include forward observation for the navy and primary forward air control for naval and air force aircraft.

The mission of 3rd Commando Brigade within NATO is as part of the combined British/Dutch landing force which is tasked with carrying out amphibious operations on the northern flank of NATO. A brief glance at the map of Europe will show that the most likely place for this force to deploy would be the Scandinavian Peninsula and, in particular, Norway.

3rd Brigade spends a good part of its time in Norway, and is trained and equipped to operate in the intense cold of the Arctic



**One man stands guard while the rest unload their gear during the covert insertion of a Naval Gunfire Support Team from 148 Battery. Photo: Gunner Davies, 29 Commando Regiment**



## ROYAL HISTORY

The fighting unit of the Royal Artillery has always been the battery and not the regiment. Few present-day regiments of the Royal Artillery are able to trace their corporate identity back much further than the 1920s and the reorganizations that took place after World War I.

By its nature the Royal Regiment of Artillery, to use its full title, has been present in every war, every battle and nearly every engagement fought by the British Army. To award a Battle Honor for every battle would be impossible and as a result the Regiment proudly bears only one: "UBIQUÉ," meaning simply "everywhere."

Many batteries however have an officially recognized honor title which appears in brackets after the battery's number. Every one of 29 Commando Regiment's batteries carries such a hard won title. The title Sphinx is borne by 7 Battery in honor of the 1801 campaign fought in Egypt against Napoleon. At that time the battery was part of the army of the East India Company and was the 1st Company, Bombay Artillery.

8 (Alma) recalls the actions of its predecessors at the Battle of the Alma in 1854 during the Crimean War with Russia when the fire of the batteries in support of the British and French infantry saved the day. The Battery is also unofficially known as "Black 8" because their gun-teams always consisted of only black horses.

In 1817 the 6th Company Bombay Artillery took part in the campaign against the Mahrattas on the dusty plains of Central India. At the Battle of Kirkee a notable victory was achieved by 6 Company's four guns and three and a half battalions of British infantry over the Peshwa of Poona's army of 26,000

men and 14 guns. The honor title Kirkee is now carried by the Company's successors, 79 Commando Battery.

The title of 148 Battery brings the story nearly up to date, commemorating as it does a desperately fought action against the Japanese at Meiktila during the 1945 advance on Mandalay in Burma.

29 Commando Regiment Royal Artillery is the direct descendant of 25 Field Regiment RA, which had a distinguished record in World War II. During the reorganization immediately after the war the regiment was redesignated 29 Field Regiment and subsequently saw service in Palestine, Egypt and Cyprus until posted to the British Army of the Rhine in 1953. Following a second tour in Cyprus in 1957 the regiment arrived at the Royal Citadel in Plymouth in 1960.

In the latter half of 1961 the army agreed to the Royal Marine's request to provide the supporting artillery for their Commandos. The Regiment was chosen for this task and recalled its detached batteries from active service in Kuwait and Aden. It was also decided that the Regiment should be Commando trained and an intensive course was conducted during January and February 1962. The Commandant General Royal Marines presented the Regiment with their green berets in May 1962, during the official parade welcoming them into Commando Forces.

By September 1962 a battery had been

detached to support Commando operations in Brunei, and this was the first battery to fire 105mm Pack Howitzer guns in anger. During the next 10 years the Regiment or batteries from the Regiment maintained a presence in the Far East, serving in Malaya, Singapore, Brunei, Sarawak and Hong Kong. Other parts of the Regiment carried out exercises with the Commandos around the globe. During these exercises the Regiment operated from such ships as HMS *Albion*, *Bulwark*, *Intrepid* and *Fearless*.

In 1965 and 1966 elements of the Regiment supported 2nd Battalion the Parachute Regiment in action in both Bahrain and Aden. Since 1971 batteries have been detached as infantry companies with their supported Commandos in Northern Ireland, and each battery supported its Commando during the Falklands war with Argentina.



**RIGHT:** Intense concentration shows on the face of a young gunner of 8 (Alma) Battery as he lays his 105mm light gun just prior to sending a round down range on a training mission. Photo: Major C.E. Parks



Circle. And wherever the Commandos go, Commando Gunners go too. Many of their senior NCOs, veterans of Operation Corporate, consider that having trained for so long in such a harsh environment enabled them to make relatively light work of the hostile conditions in the Falklands. A classic case of "train hard - fight easy."

Of course not all the work of the marines is in the cold and soldiers of 29 Commando have exercised recently in such places as Corsica, Turkey, Greece, Kenya and the United States.

Batteries of the Regiment also take their turn in providing artillery support for the small British force in Belize. This enables them to renew their jungle skills on a regular basis.

All the officers and soldiers of 29 are graduates of the All Arms Commando Course run by the Royal Marines at Lymstone, where Prince Edward, third son of Queen Elizabeth, underwent Royal Marine officer training before deciding on a career on the stage. Prior to this they have to complete a five-week preparatory course under army instructors at Seaton Barracks, Plymouth. This is designed as a hardening up period, and also serves to bring gunners, sappers and others up to speed in infantry tactics.

The Commando course itself lasts for four weeks, all of great intensity, culminating in a 30 mile route march and a run over the Tarzan course, all against the clock. While I was in Plymouth a major from 29



was sent back to do the course again having missed the deadline by just three seconds. Once they have completed the course all ranks are presented with the famous green beret. Army personnel who have qualified as Commandos wear a blue triangular patch bearing a red fighting knife on their left sleeve.

All ranks of 148 Battery are also required to complete the Parachute Regiment's P Company selection process and qualify as

**ABOVE: FIRE!** A 105 light gun of 8 Battery fires during a training mission in support of 148 Battery's training. This gun proved its worth and reliability during Operation Corporate, the Falklands War. Photo: Major C.E. Parks

Cap badge of the Royal Artillery and the Army Commando badge worn by qualified personnel on the left upper arm. Cap badge is subdued with matte black paint. Photo: Major C.E. Parks

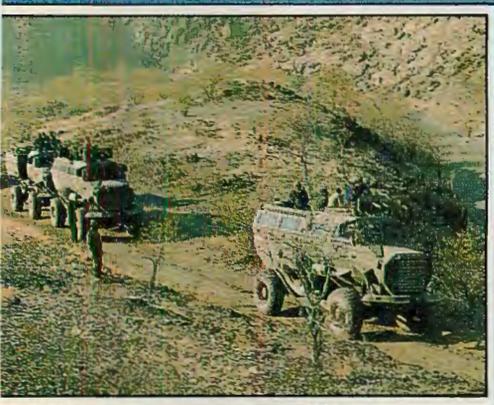


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**BELOW:** Blending into the Arctic snow, a member of Naval Gun Fire Support Team waits for the order to move out. Face mask is essential wear in the constant sub-zero conditions north of the Arctic Circle. Photo: Commando Forces News Team



## SOF COMBAT REPORT



ABOVE: Wolf Turbo APCs and Strandwolf armored supply vehicles patrolling in the Kaokoveldt.

*Editor's note: David James was the last reporter to accompany Koevoet on ops in July of 1988. The unit was disbanded shortly thereafter, in September 1988. Today the South West African POLice (SWAPOL) patrol this AO.*

**T**HE four months I spent with Koevoet, the South West African Police Counter-insurgency unit, were much more dramatic than I had bargained for. I was gathering material for a book, but I kept finding myself in the middle of the action.

In mid-January I was wounded in the right arm while taking photographs in the middle of a contact. The ricocheting AK

round stopped against the artery and median nerve in my bicep, which required micro-neurosurgery. Three weeks later, I returned to Koevoet and the bush of SWA/Namibia and Angola. Five weeks after my return I was hit again, this time by a piece of 82mm mortar shrapnel during a night attack by SWAPO [South West Africa People's Organization] on our camp near Ohangwena. The shrapnel hit me about three inches below the left elbow and stopped against the humerus the same distance above the elbow, nicking the radial nerve on its way through. Nerve damage this time was more severe; I could close the hand, but not open it. As this prevented me from using a camera quickly or holding on during high-speed pursuits in the bush, I returned to

# THE ACCIDENTAL TARGET

Text & Photos by David James

Yank Journalist  
Joins SWA's  
Frequent Fire  
Program



England and applied myself to writing my first book.

As soon as it was finished and a publisher had been found I made plans to return to southern Africa, this time with UNITA in Angola. I flew to South Africa from where I would travel to Jamba, UNITA's headquarters in southeastern Angola. Unfortunately, there was a communications failure between one of UNITA's European offices and Jamba, and I was told I would have to wait two months in South Africa. Deciding I could put my time to more valuable use, I headed for Oshakati.

One of Zulu Uniform's officers points to bullet mark from SWAPO Kalashnikov. Another bullet hit the windshield.

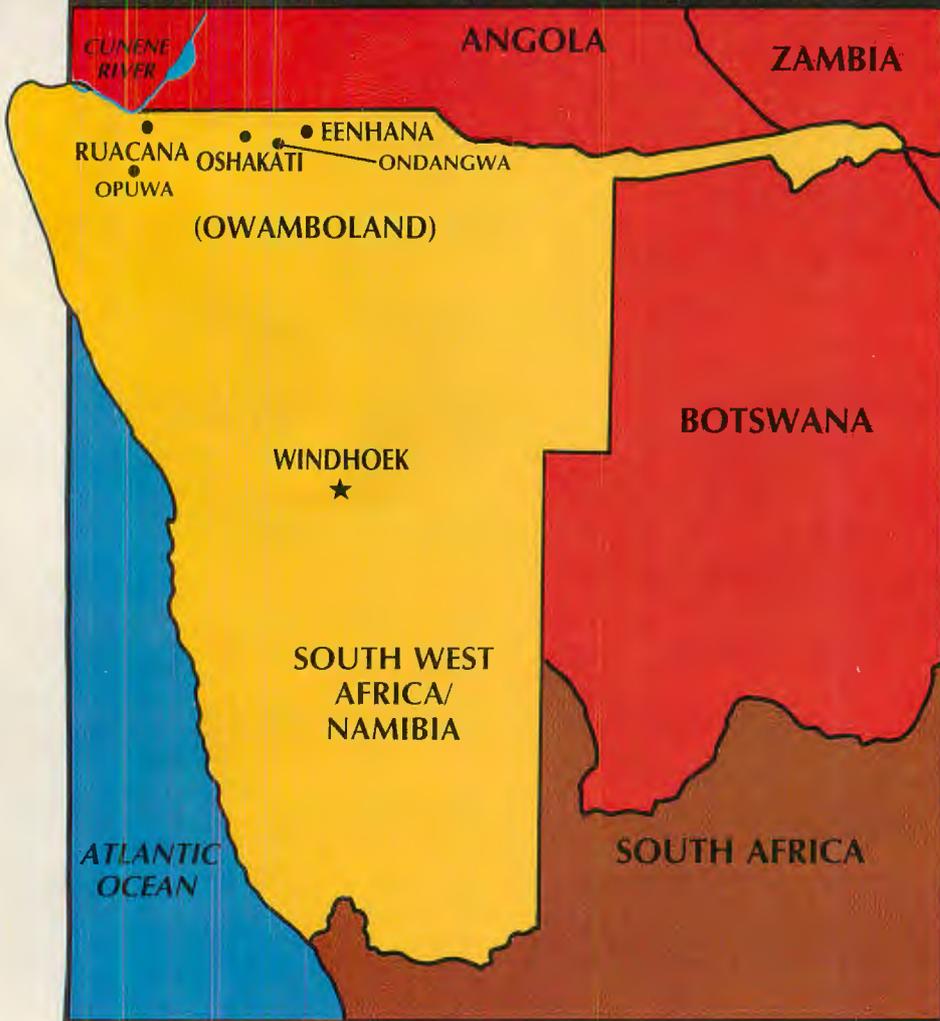
### “LUCKY” WRITER

David James, an American photojournalist living in Great Britain, has recently spent over two years in southern Africa reporting on bush wars and special units. He last penned two combat reports from the frontlines of

Angola for us (see “Angola’s Forgotten Front,” SOF, October ’89, and “Good Morning, Cachingues!” SOF, November ’89). He’s also written for *Raids*, *International Defense Review*, *Defense*, *Armed Forces* and *Jane’s Defence Weekly*.



## SOUTH WEST AFRICA/SOUTHERN ANGOLA



Angolan/South West African border area. SWAPO terrorists cross into SWA from Angola and try to penetrate south to hit less defended soft targets and civilians.

could accompany him on his next week-long deployment against SWAPO.

"Sure," Attie said one night in the canteen, "but not much is happening right now. Things are quiet. This is the dry season, remember, so the gooks aren't coming down from Angola. No rain means no water for them to drink, and since the trees have lost most of their leaves it's too easy for them to be spotted from the air. This time of year they stay far up in Angola, training for the summer infiltration. But you're welcome to come out with us; just don't expect any action."

I thanked him and the conversation turned to some of the contacts we had shared the year before. Attie's group had been working alongside the group I was with when I had been wounded the first time. He uncharitably reminded me how stupid I had been that day by sitting on top of the Casspir as we went into the contact.

One of the other guys at the table interrupted him. "Where did it hit you?" he asked. I lifted my arm and pulled up the short sleeve. He peered closely at the scar just below my armpit. "Hell, how did you get hit there?"

"Well, I had the camera up like this looking for a shot. . ."

"You must have been surrendering!" he shouted. "You must have had your arms raised. Hey, what kind of journalist did we get? A surrendering journalist!"

Everyone started laughing as I reddened. Surrendering indeed. I remembered that when I'd first arrived to begin gathering material for the book, just a few of the men had trusted me. After my first wound and subsequent return to operations, however, there had been a noticeable change in attitude. And after the second wound — well, I was one of the boys then. I had gone through a rite of passage and been accepted into an exclusive society.

"But you want to take it easy man," another one said. "You're not as young as you used to be, you know."

I frowned and took a drink of beer. Some of them enjoyed ruffling my feathers by reminding me that I had at least 20 years on most of them. I pretended I hadn't heard him.

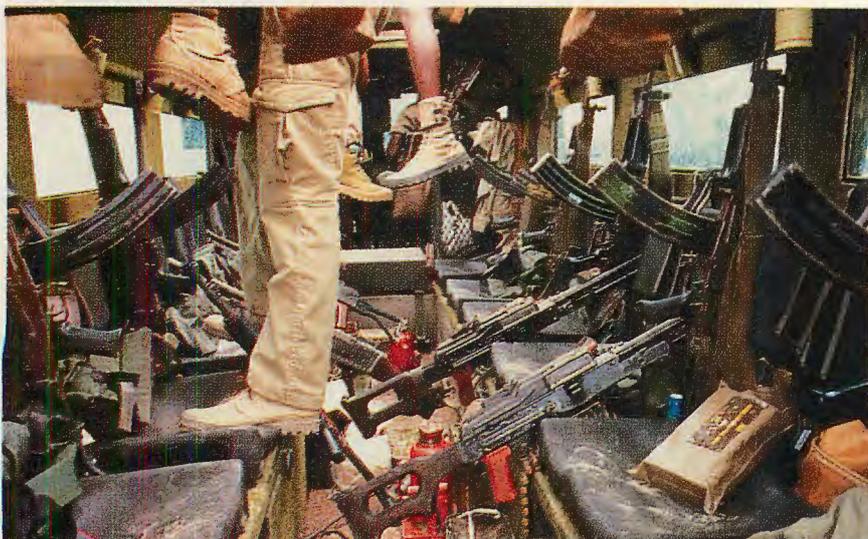
"By the way, you got any daughters old enough for me?"

"Bastards," I hissed while they fell off their chairs, laughing at their own wonderful sense of humor. Comedians, exactly what I needed.

"So what did you think when you were hit," Attie asked.

"Surprised the hell out of me. I just never thought it was going to happen," I answered, a little mollified that someone was being serious for a change. At least Attie was a good guy.

"Listen," Attie continued, "it's not the one with your name on it that you have to



My arrival in Oshakati, at the time headquarters for both the SADF [South African Defence Force] 101 Battalion and Koevoet, was like a family reunion and the first few nights were spent being "ambushed" in Koevoet's canteen. (These "ambushes" are deadly, especially when drinking double brandies and coke with an occasional beer chaser. The morning after a "serious ambush" more than one member of the unit

Trackers sit on open top of Casspir; inside is an arsenal of weapons. In addition to each man's personal R-5 assault rifle, there are two captured PKMs and other assorted hardware.

has wished he were dead.)

It didn't take me a long time to realize that it would be safer in the *veldt*, and I asked Attie Hattingh of group Zulu Uniform if I



worry about — it's the one that says 'To whom it may concern.' " Everyone laughed at the old joke. "But you can ride on the back of my car anytime," he added.

I smiled with genuine embarrassment and shook my head. "Okay, okay, you don't have to rub it in. Everyone told me it was stupid. I have no one to blame but myself. If it's all the same with you, I think I'll take my photos from inside the car next time."

"No, no," he said, grinning like a hyena, "You can ride on the back of my Casspir any time you want to. In fact I'd really appreciate it."

"Why's that," I asked, eyeing him suspiciously.

"Well, if they see an easy old target like you, maybe they won't shoot at me."

Next morning, Piet Cronje, group leader of Zulu Mike, asked if I would like to accompany his team into the Kaokoveldt. It was a part of SWA/Namibia I had not seen during my time with Koevoet the year before, and I accepted the invitation eagerly. It would be nothing more than a sightseeing trip, Piet emphasized; the desert and mountains of the Kaokoveldt rarely saw any SWAPO because of the lack of water even during the summer rains. "But," he said, "it is one of the least known and most beautiful parts of all Africa."

**ABOVE:** Dead SWAPO terr, already stripped of equipment, is forgotten as men run toward the next contact.

**BELOW:** View from the top of a Casspir. Machine gun is being test-fired in anticipation of a contact.





I quickly found Attie and explained the change in plans, apologizing for not going with his group. "Don't worry," he assured me. "You can come out with us when you get back. Nothing is happening in the veldt, anyway."

Our route took us west to Ruacana, then south to Opuwa where Koevoet maintained a base. After refueling the Wolf Turbo APCs with diesel we headed west again before turning north toward the Cunene River. Three days later we reached the Cunene, a natural border between SWA/Namibia and Angola. While most of us flung off our clothes to wash in the fast-flowing current, others stood around with assault rifles and RPGs; not only was there always the possibility of SWAPO hiding on the opposite bank, but the river teemed with crocodiles.

The only people we saw were the indigenous Ovahimba, one of the most primitive tribes anywhere in the world. A nomadic, gentle people, the women smear their bodies with a mixture of red clay and animal fat and, according to experts, never bathe. Whenever we came upon them, we did our best to remain upwind.

We stopped one afternoon at an oasis and made camp. Cooking fires were soon burning and we relaxed with cups of coffee. To the west and north the mountains rose sharp-spined and purple in the fading light. Piet was squatting next to the fire, his R-1 resting across heavy thighs.

"I worked out here for almost four years," he said finally. "Did a lot of work on foot. Bad place for ambushes." His mutilated right hand traced the broken horizon. "Walked into one not far from here, 19 gooks. They started shooting right in front of us," he said matter-of-factly, pointing to a stunted bush not more than 20 meters away."

"So what happened?" I asked, unable to hold the question back.

"We had no cover, no place to go except forward. Floored seven of the bastards. I killed four myself." He stood, slipped the

**Wounded driver, his lower leg shattered by Soviet anti-armor rifle grenade, is treated prior to loading on the casevac chopper.**

rifle sling over his shoulder and stalked off to check on his men.

Half an hour later the stocky rugby player returned and poured another cup of coffee. We stared into the fire for a long time until he finally broke the silence. "The worst ambush I ever hit was not long after I first started working in the Kaokoveldt," he said quietly. "We were driving along a trail out there," his chin lifted toward the mountains. "There was a shallow dry river on our right and a tall *kopje* (rocky hill) on the left. I was at the back of the Casspir when we were hit. Two RPGs went through the front of the car and two more cars behind us were hit. My car turned into the river bed and I thought the driver was trying to find cover. I didn't know it then, but he was dead. By the time we stopped, the car was burning. The rest of us got out and started firing toward the kopje, but we didn't know where the terts were. When the driver and gunner didn't come out I went back in to get them. I was going to take the driver first, but when my hand went halfway through his neck I knew he was dead, so I grabbed the gunner and dragged him out. His left leg was gone and the right one was connected with just a small piece of muscle.

"I put a tourniquet on the left leg — actually there wasn't much bleeding because an RPG cauterizes everything — then cut off the right one and tied it off before starting a drip in him. Flames from the car made a good target so we were receiving mortar fire. I had to crawl back to the other two cars to treat the wounded. The terts finally stopped shooting, but we didn't know if they had fucked off or were moving around to hit us from another direction. We had to wait from 1900 hours that night until 0900 the next morning until the casevac Pumas arrived." Piet shook his head and

looked at me. "The gunner died. I thought I could save him, but he died just before the Pumas arrived."

Silence returned and the fire captured our eyes once more. I heard Piet sigh and looked up at him. "But that was when I was still a youngster," he said shyly, embarrassed for having talked so much.

"How old are you now, Piet?" I asked, the story still echoing inside my head.

"Twenty-three," he said in an old, tired voice.

A week later I was once again in that part of SWA/Namibia I knew so well from the previous year: the flat, thickly bushed terrain of central and eastern Ovamboland. I had spent more time with Attie's group, Zulu Uniform, and its bush partner Zulu Quebec than with any other Koevoet combat groups. In 1987 they had been the top scorers of the unit and I had experienced most of my 13 contacts with them. The thick bush reminded me that none of those contacts occurred at ranges of more than 30 meters.

July is winter in southern Africa. Nights can be bitterly cold and I was surprised to wake the first morning with frost on my sleeping bag. Tactics remained the same, however, and consisted of driving from one remote kraal to another, questioning the local population about the presence of SWAPO terrorists in the area. But, as Attie had warned me, there was little chance of action. Occasionally our hopes would rise when an Ovambo farmer would say, "Yes, I saw two going east."

"When?" the Ovambo police trackers would ask.

"Three weeks ago." *Shit.*

It was the morning of the fourth day when we received a radio message from the Koevoet ops room at Eenhana; an army patrol had been attacked by at least 10 insurgents at sunset the night before. The position was two hours away from us and by the time we arrived another Koevoet group was on the scene and following nine sets of tracks. As we were only a few kilometers south of the border, it was assumed that the attackers had already escaped into Angola.

Surprisingly, however, the clearly visible tracks headed east. Attie was on the ground with the trackers, a portable radio on his back so he could coordinate the pursuit and call for casevac choppers if necessary. I joined him while the Casspirs flanked us. If a contact was made, the cars would take over and handle it with their superior firepower while everyone on the ground took cover.

I was running on the trail with Attie. Suddenly one of the trackers in front of us stopped and pointed ahead into the bush. "Contact comes now-now," he said excitedly. The terts were only minutes away. Attie radioed to Eenhana, telling them to scramble the helicopters. "Jim! Get in the car!" he yelled at me, and I ran for the nearest Casspir. Immediately the Casspirs sped up. The black policemen in the cars drew back the bolts on their R-5s to double check that rounds were chambered. There

**Warrant Officer Attie Hattingh, group leader of Zulu Uniform, maintains comms with other combat groups.**

were clicks as safeties snapped down and muzzles were pushed through the spring-loaded gun ports. By now the insurgents could certainly hear the growls of the pursuing Casspirs. Would they stop to set an ambush?

Somewhere in the recesses of my mind I suddenly wondered what they were carrying. Heatstrims [Soviet-made anti-armor rifle grenades]? RPG-7s or the new 75s? *Is this the day it happens?* Would the next moment stop forever in the blazing, flesh-shredding explosion of an anti-armor missile burning through thin steel? But the fear which tingled just below the surface was blunted by the adrenaline coursing through my body.

Muscles flexed under sweat-stained shirts as hands tightened on weapons and eyes scanned the bush through the thick glass. I looked up as I heard the chattering whine of a chopper and saw an Alouette III pass diagonally above us. Any minute now... a-n-y minute.

Now! One of the cars less than 30 meters ahead of us hit the contact in a sudden, staccato crackling of gunfire. As we rolled into it I could see the haze of gray gun-smoke. "Contact! Contact!" the radio screeched. A tracer ricocheted, cutting a split-second, red-orange streak through the haze. The gunner in my car was firing, aiming to the left. Streams of 20mm shells chopped down bush and raised exploding geysers of dust and sand.

Bang! and a Casspir 10 meters away swerved and shuddered to a stop, hit with a Heatstrim. We went past it as the firing reached a crescendo, overwhelming even the sounds of cars and radios. A bullet ricocheted next to me off the side of the car and I dropped quickly inside. Whether enemy or friendly fire, either could kill just as quickly. I lifted the camera, everything seeming to happen in slow motion as I snapped photos of the Ovambo policemen in the Casspir. There was another explosion and I heard "Casevac! Casevac!" on the radio. *Shit!* I thought. What the hell am I doing here? This is fucking dangerous! Where are they? Who has been hit? Then we were circling with two other cars, all of them pouring fire into the thick bush.

Although the contact seemed to last for hours, it was only two minutes after it started when someone was ordering, "Stop fire! Stop fire!" on the radio. We halted and the trackers in the car swarmed out, weapons ready. Attie quickly arrived. One of the cars had been hit with a Heatstrim. The Russian anti-armor rifle grenade had struck the bottom corner of the windshield and deflected down, hitting the driver below the knee. As he was carried gently from the Casspir, Attie sent two cars to clear a landing zone for the helicopter. They roared back and forth, knocking down small trees



and bush. To one side of the hastily prepared landing zone, the medics were treating the driver. He was given an injection of morphine as his trouser leg was cut away and the badly shattered leg immobilized with a splint. Attie threw a red smoke grenade and the Alouette appeared above us and settled to the ground in a howling wind-storm of sand, dust and leaves. The driver was carried on a stretcher to the waiting helicopter and placed on the floor next to the pilot. The "Allo" immediately lifted and turned south toward the primary trauma center at Ondangwa Air Force Base.

As soon as the helicopter disappeared we heard firing from the west; one of the other groups had continued past us, still following the trail of the last four insurgents. From the radios we heard the same excited call again: "Contact!" We ran for the two cars which were still operating and sped toward the fighting. As we crashed through the thick bush we heard an explosion and then a surprisingly calm voice saying, "We have a casevac, we have a casevac." The sound of firing ahead of us increased in volume. Over the radio came a voice ordering "Stop fire! Stop fire!"

"Fuck you!" said another voice. "We have two more over here!"

"Stop fire! Stop fire!"

"Fuck you!"

This went on for half a minute before the second voice finally said, "Okay, okay, stop fire, we got them." Firing finally slowed and stopped.

When we arrived one of the white car commanders was being carried out of his Casspir. His right leg had been hit just below the hip by a Heatstrim. A quick look made it obvious that the leg could not be

Koevoet troopie walks past Casspir with tandem, pintle-mounted .50 caliber Brownings and 7.62mm GPMG. Second GPMG is from Casspir parked alongside one in foreground.

saved. Casspirs were already clearing the second landing zone of the morning when one of Attie's trackers shouted that one more spoor had been found. We jumped into the cars and began the final chase. Before we had moved more than 100 meters we heard a brief exchange of gunfire. The last SWAPO terrorist had been found.

As we returned to the scene of the second contact we saw the Alouette taking off. Like the first one, it turned south toward Ondangwa, carrying the badly wounded car commander. A few hours later we heard that his leg had been amputated immediately on arrival at the trauma center.

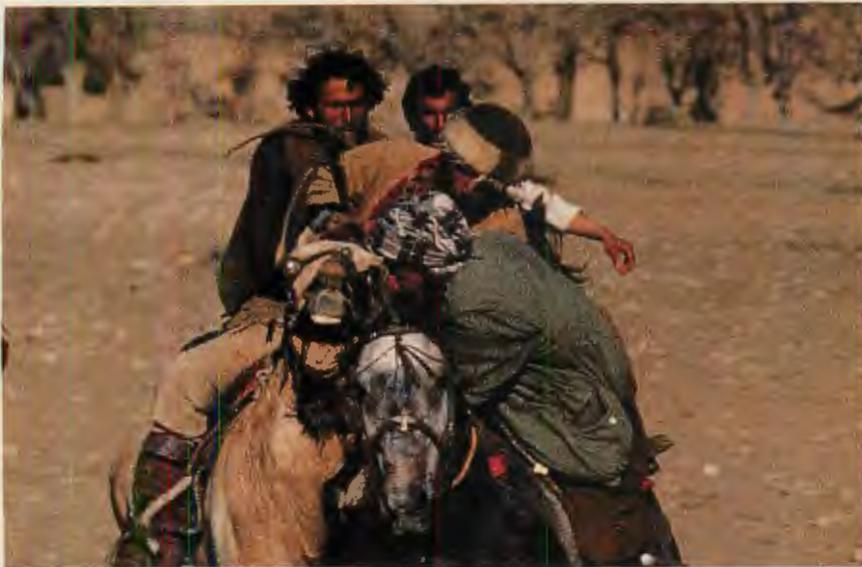
At the end of the week we returned to Oshakati. As soon as the Casspirs had been unloaded we headed for the canteen. Hot showers would come after a couple of drinks. The other officers joined us. We all drank cold beers to wash the dust from our throats. Attie placed a triple brandy and coke in front of me. "Thanks," he said.

"For what?" I asked.

"We had no contacts for almost a month. Then you arrive and we get nine of the bastards! You must have brought us luck."

I said that the men who had been wounded probably didn't think I had brought them much luck. "That is war," Attie said. "Listen," he added, "we think we are going to kidnap you and keep you here. You are definitely good luck."

"No thanks," I said. It was time for me to head for Angola. ☘



ABOVE & RIGHT: Clashing melee of a *buzkashi* match at Safed Shir in Panjshir Valley.

**SOF AFGHANISTAN**

# BLOODY PANJSHIR

**“When Death Comes the Brave Are Free”**

**Text & Photos by Peter Douglas**

**T**HE Panjshir Valley is famed throughout Afghanistan as the base of Ahmad Shah Massoud, the powerful and charismatic northern commander who held off repeated Russian offensives against his mujahideen. During 10 years of war at least nine major offensives were sent up this narrow valley and much of the armor that came up it never left. Rusting, splintered remains litter the valley from end to end, like a giant graveyard.

Anywhere you go in Afghanistan you can see and count the cost of the war to the Afghans; thousands of square miles of desolate countryside and thousands of deserted crumbling villages. But only in the Panjshir can you grasp the cost to the Russians. As wars go Afghanistan was not costly for the Soviets, but it was in the Panjshir that most of the bill was footed. Today, the reminders of these battles lie scattered across its



Author next to unexploded bomb. This is one of the latest types dropped by the Soviets in the last few weeks before their withdrawal. Like their involvement in Afghanistan, this one was a dud.

### WITH PEN BACK TO PAKISTAN

Peter Douglas is a former Royal Marine and an experienced combat photojournalist. He's filed previous stories for SOF from Afghanistan and Cambodia. The first part of "Bloody Panjshir" appeared in last month's issue.



## LION OF THE PANJSHIR

Panjshir is said to mean the five lions. Who, or what, these lions were has not been recorded, the origins lost in the mists of history. One may have been Alexander the Great, who crossed into Panjshir via the 11,000 foot Khaiwak Pass on his way to India. A second may have been Tamerlane who used the same route centuries later. Now Massoud is also said to be one of these lions.

When I reached the Panjshir he was absent in another region; coincidentally, when he arrived it was also over the Khaiwak Pass and also on his way to battle in the south.

I had not previously met Massoud, but all I'd heard about him inclined me to believe that he would have, or be preparing, a realistic plan with Kabul as its ultimate goal.

His has been a war of mobility, fast hard strikes and rapid withdrawal, of evasion from Soviet efforts to lure his forces into traps. Now he has to convert his guerrilla army into a more conventional force capable of sustaining an assault on Kabul. He needs time to do this, but realizes that time may no longer be on his side as a power struggle begins between contending guerrilla factions. He is currently working on training an "Islamic Force" of 10,000 mujahideen. He realizes a premature strike would be costly in men, materiel and morale should it fail.

While the military leaders of other parties dissipate the energies of their men on attacks against secondary targets like Jalalabad, Massoud is keeping the prime objective, Kabul, firmly in his sights.

"Our plan is not only to organize our forces and launch an offensive against Kabul. Our plan is to prepare the ground so that all major fronts, especially those around Kabul, can launch a joint offensive under a single command. . . If we decide that the situation is right for an offensive against Kabul and if we are sure that we can, God willing, capture Kabul, then there will be no need to deploy our forces in the north and waste time. We would launch an offensive against Kabul directly."

The importance of a direct attack against the capital is obvious and Massoud has assessed the communist Najibullah regime's defenses against such an attack.

"In my opinion government forces in Kabul are very vulnerable; Kabul itself could be surrounded by mujahideen forces soon. It has only two outlets to the outside world, Khowja Rawash [Kabul airport] and the Salang Highway [the only direct road from the USSR] which is usually closed. . . As for the government forces and the defense of Kabul, there are weaknesses both in terms of quantity and quality. Therefore they would not be able to defend Kabul and resist an offensive by an organized force operating under a unified command."

Unity of command and a disciplined, organized force is certainly something that Massoud puts great emphasis on. He has closely followed the fortunes of the mujahideen besieging the city of Jalalabad and has some serious criticism of the way that battle has been conducted.

"The consequences of the fact that there has been a lack of a joint command are obvious. Because of this there has been a lack of coordination in fighting and launching offensives from different fronts. The government took advantage of this and dealt with offensives one by one. There were other serious shortcomings in the plan of action. For example, there wasn't any plan to cut off the road linking Jalalabad to Kabul."

Concerned that Massoud may be able to unite enough differing factions to launch an effective offensive against Kabul, the Najibullah regime has been operating a smear campaign stating publicly that Massoud has been conducting behind-the-scenes negotiations with them. Massoud categorically denies this.

"After 10 years of fighting in Afghanistan everybody knows which groups have resisted the Russians most fiercely, and the

communist regime in Afghanistan. We have refuted this kind of propaganda many times in the past and we make it clear again now that we will not compromise with the regime under any circumstances. The People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan [the Najibullah regime] has been solely responsible for the war and bloodshed in Afghanistan and its existence can only prolong the war."

He is realistic about the need for joint military cooperation between rival political factions within the mujahideen.

"I must remind you that the war in Afghanistan has continued for more than 10 years and people from different regions and different fronts have taken up arms, have fought and established themselves as fronts in their own regions. And by merely capturing Kabul no single group or party can stage a coup and rule the country. The other point is that no single party can capture Kabul without help. . . We are fighting for Islam, God and for the salvation of the nation, and who will come to power first should not be important to a Muslim."

On 23 February of this year, at a *shura* (an Islamic consultative council) held in Pakistan by the seven major mujahideen exiled political parties, an interim government-in-exile was hastily formed. It was immediately formally recognized by Saudi Arabia, the only country to do so, and allowed to take up the lapsed Afghanistan seat of the Islamic Conference Organization. To date this remains their only victory in the political arena over the Najibullah regime. This interim government was responsible for approving the plan to seize Jalalabad, an attack that quickly ground to a halt and has remained a stand-off ever since.

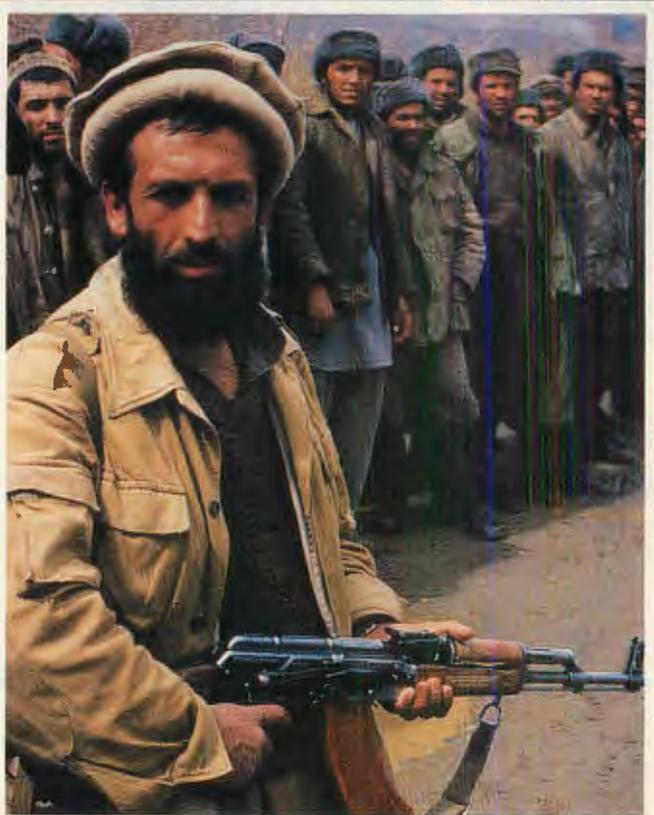
Massoud recognizes the need to have a unified front for the Afghan guerrillas presented to the outside world and therefore recognizes the desirability of the formation of an interim government, but he has expressed reservations about the manner in which it was formed and the power divided.

"The provisional government has undoubtedly some flaws and weaknesses. Firstly, that the Shi'ite (smaller of the two principle Islamic divisions and in Afghanistan located mostly in the central Hazarajat region) brothers who are a part of the Afghan nation have no part in it. Secondly, when the *shura* was being held in Islamabad it was claimed that all field commanders inside Afghanistan were consulted. The fact is that most of these commanders inside Afghanistan were not consulted. For example, I myself was informed only two days before the meeting [it was at that time a minimum 10 day trip to reach Pakistan] that I should send a representative. Therefore, a large proportion of mujahideen inside Afghanistan did not know what was going on in the conference. Thirdly, each party was given 60 votes whereas inside Afghanistan the strength of parties is not the same. There are parties who are very powerful and have major bases within the country, and there are those which are not equally powerful. Therefore it is our view that giving 60 votes to each party is not fair.

"Despite these problems, and in order to keep unity among the Muslim mujahideen in this historical moment, the Supervisory Council [the unified Council of the North formed by Massoud] supports the provisional government, and we hope that this provisional government can achieve what it is set up to achieve and that is to prepare for a general election inside Afghanistan. We hope that this government can prepare for these elections within six months of its formation. . . If we have more military victories most countries will recognize this government."

In the 10 years I have been reporting the war in Afghanistan Massoud is, without doubt, the most charismatic leader I have met. It may just be that he is also the key to Afghanistan's future. After 10 years of war Massoud still has a clear definite objective in sight.

"The first thing was to defeat and expel the Russians from Afghanistan. This has now happened and we thank God for it. Now our task is to overthrow the Najibullah government."



**ABOVE & RIGHT:** Afghan army prisoners captured at TALEGAN in Northern Afghanistan. In a short, sharp engagement Massoud was able to overpower the Afghan army by swift coordinated action and crush their morale. Over 2,000 men surrendered.

floor: BMP-1s, BMP-2s, T-54s, T-64s, BRDM-2s, BTR-152s, BTR-60s, BTR-70s, T-12s, BTR-50Ps, MTPs, GAZ trucks ad infinitum. Amongst all these ground-bound rusting relics are a few Mi-24 and Mi-8 helicopter remains.

There isn't a single stretch of road that doesn't have some trace of Soviet losses. Tank bodies lie off the road next to bits of track. In villages that were occupied, huge mounds of grey shell casings are heaped up. While every scrap of metal tells a tale of some past clash, what is on show is only a fraction of the losses. The majority has been cleared out by the Soviets. If such flotsam marks the tides of war, it is evident that here, there must have been a ferocious storm.

The main purpose of my hazardous journey north had been to track down Massoud. He was expected in the valley but no one could say for certain when, as even now his movements remain unpredictable to prevent government assassination attempts. There was nothing to do but wait.

Waiting in Afghanistan normally turns up something worth doing and soon a *buzkashi* match was organized at Safed Shir, further up the valley. Although really a sport of the north, *buzkashi* is the national game of Afghanistan. The name *buzkashi* translates as "goat-grabbing," and this is exactly what two mounted teams attempt to do. Each team tries to place the carcass of a goat, or calf, into a circle drawn on the earth which serves as a goal. While theoretically a game of two teams, members of both teams tend to function as individuals, each intent on grabbing the goat and the glory and transporting it with all haste to the goal whilst opposing team members do their best to do the same.

It is a rough, wild game with few rules and much action. The exact origins are obscure; that it is a surviving trace of the culture of the wild, nomadic Mongol tribes that swept across central Asia seems certain.

I had seen the game played in Peshawar, but that was a shadow of the real thing. Here, under the lapis-blue skies of

high, northern Afghanistan, it is played in full medieval splendor. Nearly 100 horsemen were on the field, thundering up and down in charge and countercharge, for all the world like an ancient cavalry battle. The ground shook as the horses swarmed past. One can well imagine the terror which the ancestors of these horsemen must have evoked. Their cries and the clashing of the melee as they grappled for the goat carcass were like listening to echoes of history. It really has to be seen to be fully appreciated.

When Massoud arrived, the *rumor* of his presence spread like wildfire down the valley. He was the topic of conversation everywhere. Massoud is under great pressure at this critical juncture of the war. While keen to press on to Kabul, he realizes that he has to be fully prepared for all that this entails. All day long streams of commanders come to him for advice



Nowhere is it as evident as in the Panjshir Valley the bloody price the Soviets paid for invading Afghanistan.

and orders. His days are long and wearing, which is clearly discernable from his tired expression. But still he always rises to greet even the least of field commanders, with a warm smile and Islamic embrace. In 10 years of reporting on Afghanistan I find him to be, without question, the most charismatic Afghan leader I have met.

After an interview with Massoud (see "Lion of the Panjshir," on page 38) it was time to head south once again. The winter snows had melted away and Ramadan, the Islamic month of fasting, had arrived early. The exact timing of Ramadan varies each year as it is linked to the lunar calendar and is the ninth month of the Islamic year. It begins with the physical sighting of the new moon. This month of fasting makes travel in Afghanistan even more uncomfortable as food, including water, can only be consumed at night. Even though you are technically exempt from fasting if you make a long journey in one day, or a journey that will last more than three days, most Afghans attempt under these circumstances to fast anyway as an act of greater religious piety. Consequently it is extremely difficult to hire a baggage horse, or persuade anyone to move during the hot daylight hours. The night is extensively used up by feasting and the days in trying to sleep away the fasting hours. When you can persuade a horse dealer to keep to a schedule of daylight movement (or even night movement) it costs much more than at any other time of year because of the extra hardship involved. If you are lucky your escort will tolerate your western notions of when to eat and drink. If not, you have endless hassles trying to organize anything to eat or drink along the way. Villages can be very hostile if you eat or drink whilst passing through them during the day.

Heading south was much faster now that the snow had melted and the mud dried out. But there was still much caution at night in case of encounters with other political groups. During







**ABOVE:** Jamiat commander Bizmillah's mujahideen. All are dressed in ex-Soviet uniforms.

**RIGHT:** Tail rotor of downed Mi-8 with fuselage in background. While this is in Afghan air force colors it may well have been Soviet piloted as some Soviet gunships are reported to have flown in Afghan air force identification.



daylight hours you could see for miles and give other groups a wide berth.

The route south began badly as some equipment was pilfered from packs locked in a storeroom and the missing items weren't noticed until needed much further down the trail. If you are going to lose kit in Afghanistan, nine times out of 10 it will be stolen immediately prior to departure, the theory being that by the time you notice the theft it will be much too late to return. And they are exactly right. If you've just risked your hide crawling past some government post, and spent another day avoiding other hostile groups, and then notice that your sleeping bag is gone just when you finally have a chance to grab a few hours sleep, are you really going to backtrack, lose all that time and add all that risk, or just sleep with your coat on?

Soon we walked into an inter-party fight. An argument over irrigation rights became a shouting match, developed into a shooting match and ended up with a corpse. This required suitable blood revenge. The next day two more men were killed. All of this made further travel impossible. During a three day period everyone was nervous of daylight movement and terrified of night movement. Seven mujahideen were killed on one side and three on the other. Half our party was captured trying to sneak away at night but talked their way out of execution by assurances of their impartiality and an offer of some spare ammunition (this to a faction politically opposed to them!).

When we finally broke clear of this internecine bloody squabble we made the best time we could. During one night move we passed Bagram airport, north of Kabul. This was a major Soviet airbase prior to their pullout. As we meandered, slightly lost, in an area that required us to cross several deep, fast-flowing streams, an aircraft taking off from Bagram

crashed. The resultant fireball, which lit up the countryside for miles around, solved our problem by giving us an exact point of reference to move by.

That night we reached the safety of a village loyal to the political faction, Jamiat-i-Islami, with whom I was travelling. Weary of the long night's walk we curled up, ready for sleep. Only a few hours later however, we were up and moving once again. The daily routine was developing into one endless march, with a few snatched hours sleep here and there. Meals were irregular and we lived on biscuits and cake when no meals were available. Constantly on the alert for trouble from other mujahideen groups, we passed through areas hostile, indifferent, or sympathetic to us. We never seemed to be sure of what reception we would receive.

At last we reached Chakadra. Here I parted with the group I had been travelling with and, as the route was described as 100% secure, was given a two-man, unarmed escort to accompany me the rest of the way to Paghman. In Afghanistan there is no such thing as 100% secure. My escort immediately lost the way and we were saved from walking into a government militia post by a chance encounter with men gathering firewood. Their warning of a militia post sent alarm bells ringing in my head. Obviously things were not as secure as I'd been led to believe. Afghans hate to impart bad news and, with every good intention, will inevitably seek to assure you that all is well when a little more adherence to the facts would be of far more use. Later, when again lost, I insisted that we stop to ask for further directions; my escort was inclined to plough on and trust God to sort things out, rather than taking a few elementary precautions. The mujahideen who we asked directions from expressed surprise that we intended to go on

unarmed, and gave us an escort of two armed men.

They guided us along back paths well concealed from the militia post, until we were only 20 minutes short of our next stopping point, prior to crossing the Paghman range. Here they pointed out the trail, advised us to hurry, and turned back. What could go wrong so close to our immediate destination?

The first shot cracked high overhead. Not unusual in a nation of so many armed men who cannot resist firing just to hear the noise the gun makes. Lawrence of Arabia described this as "joy firing." If such random shooting is an indication of joy, then I can only presume that Afghans are deliriously happy most of the time, as the temptation just to shoot blindly at rocks, mountains, birds, stones or simply the sky, is seldom resisted.

The second shot was a little lower and made us all flinch visibly. My companions were 50 meters ahead of me as we closed with a low ridge. One turned and said he could see people and indicated the gully that ran up to join the track we were on. I certainly couldn't see anybody. Then two shots cracked past. Single shots are possibly chance, double shots rarely so. We threw ourselves down for a second, then my two companions leapt up and ran to the crest, which they were much closer to than I. I rose to move and two more shots cracked very close to my head. There was no doubt now that this was aimed fire. I realized that I could not make the ridge as the shots were all directed at me, as the closest target. The moment to run was never present.

I stood up, desperately hoping I was mistaken in the way I thought things were panning out. Down in the gully I could now see a lone gunman advancing on me rapidly while calling out to unseen companions to close up. My assumption was that he was a government militia man as he wore no uniform and was obviously hostile to me. An attempt to walk on (I thought if I could only bluff my way forward another 25 meters I might be able to bolt for the ridge) drew several more rounds in my direction. I threw myself down and cursed the lack of any cover. These shots were fired from the hip, so presumably were meant to intimidate, rather than kill me.

Realizing that somewhat desperate measures were all that were available to me, I called out that all was well and waved at the gunman in as friendly a fashion as I could muster. Cautiously rising I asked him to stop firing and said that I'd wait for him to close up. The gunman continued to advance and ordered me to come to him. Knowing that he had unseen companions, I estimated that my chances of survival if I moved down to join him were zero, and called for him to join me, explaining that I could not speak much Dari (the Persian dialect used in northern Afghanistan). Up until this point I spoke mostly Pushto, the language of southern Afghanistan. In fact I soon had every incentive to dredge up every word of Dari I could remember.

Another attempt to casually stroll on drew a fusillade of shots at waist height which kicked up spurts of dirt on the ridge next to me. Before they stopped I was pressed as prone as a crushed tin can in the dirt. Rising to one knee, I called out again not to shoot. The need to keep moving was obvious but not one the gunman sympathized with. When I again stood up I found myself instinctively trying to scrunch up into the smallest target I could. The gunman screamed instructions to stop and, at 50 meters, came up on aim. Looking directly down his barrel and sights I knew the next shots would mean death.

This was a nightmare. Relaxing as much as possible, I eased myself erect and shouted out again that I could not understand him as I was a foreigner and could not speak much Dari. His face was a mask of glowering rage as he closed the last few yards. My legs began to tremble and I took several large draughts of air in an attempt to stop them. In a few strides the gunman was on the path beside me and obviously hyped up, with his finger on the trigger.

Trying to defuse the situation, and considering that this unfortunate misunderstanding might only be the result of yet another inter-party problem, I explained once again that I was a foreigner. Not wanting to say that I was with the mujahideen in



A frequent sight in Panjshir are mounds of shell casings left by the Soviets. These are 122mm casings in Rokha, Panjshir.

case he turned out to be government militia, I asked which *karagi* he was from, hoping to gain a clue as to his own political loyalties. He snarled back that he belonged to no *karagi* and raising one hand, he pointed at me and said, "You're . . .," he finished the statement by slicing his finger across his throat in an unmistakable gesture. Things did not look good.

He must have been in his late teens or early twenties, nervous and definitely with the upper hand. I presumed he was worried in case I had a support party closing up, or in case those who ran off were able to get help and come back. I was just plain worried about everything.

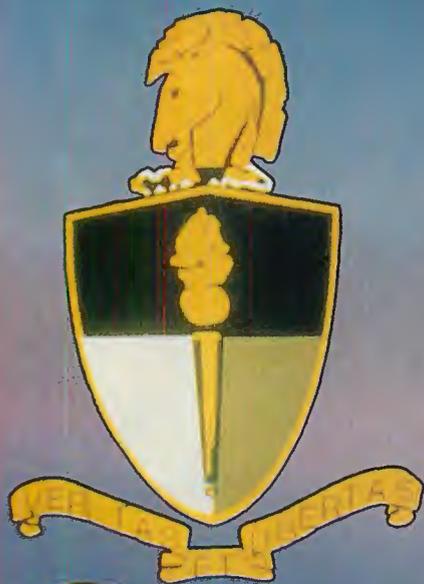
Then he spotted my watch. His eyes visibly lit up. There was perhaps room to negotiate.

But one thrust of the AK-47 toward my chest, and a command to give him my watch, seriously weakened my bargaining position. I stalled for time and told him that there was no need for the gun, he could have whatever he wanted; I only wanted to go on unharmed, was leaving Afghanistan and only wished a safe exit.

He stabbed a finger at my pants pocket, which bulged with toilet paper; presumably he thought I had a wallet stuffed with cash. In fact, by chance, my bankroll was in the small backpack I had on. I reached for the pocket to *remove* the contents and he flinched back, gripping the AK-47, and screamed that he wanted my pants!

My heart had been lodged in my throat, probably raising my voice several octaves. Now I swallowed it without trace. The

*Continued on page 74*



**SOF UNCONVENTIONAL  
WARFARE**

# SPECIAL FORCES



ABOVE: Students in Special Forces Qualification course react to enemy contact. The "Q" course helps select the men with the right stuff from the ranks of those who apply.

RIGHT: A Military Free Fall student jumps at altitude requiring oxygen while carrying a load of combat equipment.

# FORGE

Training Spec  
Ops Warriors  
of the '90s

by Major R.B. Anderson  
Photos courtesy  
SWCS/U.S. Army

## SPECIAL FORCES SCRIVENER

R. B. Anderson is a Special Forces major currently assigned to the Joint Doctrine Center at Norfolk, Virginia. He attended the "Q" course as an enlisted man in 1968 and later as an officer

in 1985. He served 19 months in combat and has held a variety of command and staff assignments. The views expressed in this article are Major Anderson's and do not reflect the official policy or position of the Department of the Army, Department of Defense, or the U.S. Government.

During the '60s the dark green beret of the Special Forces became part of our national culture. Barry Sadler, Robin Moore and John Wayne glorified, and the media generally vilified, Special Forces but few outside the special ops community really understood the men commonly referred to as Green Berets (which, incidentally, many SFers will tell you is a hat, not a man).

As we move into the 1990s, Special Operations Forces (SOF) will play an increasingly important role in our national defense as the emphasis shifts further from high-intensity conflicts (Air-Land Battle, or conventional war) to the low-intensity front — brushfire insurgencies and counterinsurgencies. There are no fixed lines of engagement, no maneuvering of divisions or

corps in that type of warfare. Rather, it comes down to one man, highly trained and motivated, who has the ability to train others to fight and win, and if necessary, join the battle himself.

This article details just what it takes to train these Special Forces warriors.

THE United States military defines Special Operations as "operations conducted by specially trained, equipped, and organized forces against strategic or tactical targets in pursuit of national objectives." The U.S. Army agency charged with providing the special training, developing the special equipment, and organizing the fighting structure for these forces is the John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School, located at Fort Bragg, N.C. It is officially referred to by the acronym SWCS

but conversationally called SWC (pronounced "swick").

SWCS and the U.S. Special Forces were born in 1952 with the selection of cadre for the formation of the 10th Special Forces. Special Forces was modeled after the American wartime clandestine intelligence agency and secret sponsor of resistance movements in World War II, the Office of Strategic Services (OSS). Their initial charter was to select and train soldiers capable of operating in small teams behind enemy

lines. In the words of Colonel Aaron Bank, the founding father of Special Forces, each team would be able to develop "an indigenous, secret, phantom army, well dispersed initially, but then able to strike repeatedly and disappear deep into the heartland of enemy territory."

Over the years the role of Special Forces and SWCS has broadened. In addition to unconventional warfare, SWCS trains modern Special Forces in anti-terrorism, intelligence, civil affairs, and psychological op-





erations. SWCS' role was further expanded in May 1987, when it came under the operational control of the newly created joint service headquarters, the U.S. Special Operations Command (USSOCOM). Although its primary responsibility is still to the Army, SWCS trains a large and increasing number of sailors, airmen, Marines, and foreign officers, and to a large degree, serves as a special operations university.

SWCS is much more than a school house. It performs myriad functions for the Army's Special Operations community. For the purposes of this article, these functions will be grouped into two categories: training and force support.

#### Training

Because of its expanded role and because of the renewed interest in SOF, enrollment at

**Special Forces instructor shows students how to construct a poncho raft.**

## SPECIAL MISSIONS, SPECIAL MEN, SPECIAL TRAINING: SPECIAL FORCES

What we know today as Special Forces grew in response to the truism that the best strategy for defeating guerrilla forces is to fight them with their own tactics, but be better at those tactics than they are.

Tracing their past at least back to the partisan trainers of the OSS, one of the main *raison d'être* of the Special Forces has always been to train indigenous personnel to do just this. They always have been, of course, capable of and often tasked with a great deal more, sometimes having been tasked with operational missions just because they were extraordinarily capable. In some instances this raised the question of whether or not they were being most efficiently used, because as trainers of indigenous troops they were worth their weight in gold.

In the decade that followed World War II, Special Forces picked up threads left dangling by disbandment of the old OSS, and worked hand-in-glove with the successive agency, the CIA. The Cold War had new fronts, new priorities, and new tactics which were best employed by indigenous partisans, or covertly, or by low-profile Special Forces. These new soldiers were not just commandos, or Rangers, or covert operatives — although they were capable in these roles as well — but were primarily envisioned as an elite cadre to *train indigenous personnel* to be commandos, Rangers and covert operatives. It appears the Special Forces are now placing greater emphasis on this original and most important role.

By 1957, U.S. Special Forces advisers

were assisting South Vietnamese Ranger and airborne units with counterinsurgency (COIN) training. In 1959 107 U.S. Army Special Forces, under command of Lieutenant Colonel Arthur "Bull" Simons, were training Meo tribesmen to fight the 7,000 NVA troops and communist Pathet Lao guerrillas in Laos.

At this stage, and perhaps rightfully so, Laotian special forces operations fell under control of the Program Evaluation Office (PEO), a covert CIA cover operation established in 1958 to disrupt the communist infrastructure and interdict the supply routes in northeastern Laos used by Hanoi to supply their insurgents in South Vietnam. Bull Simmons' "White Star" teams, along with a few CIA officers and elite Thai Border Police, organized the nucleus of a Meo army, which eventually numbered more than 40,000 guerrillas under the command of General Vang Pao. This force effectively wreaked havoc on NVA and Pathet Lao operations.

The CIA recognized early on the potential of and necessity for military special operations forces in Southeast Asia. Edward Lansdale, brigadier general in the Pentagon's Office of Special Operations, and also a CIA operative, had run the Saigon Military Mission of the U.S. Embassy in Vietnam since mid-1954. His report to President Kennedy in 1961 recommended unconventional warfare actions in Vietnam, stressing that the only effective way to thwart communist aggression in the South was to adopt North Vietnamese and Viet Cong guerrilla tactics. Kennedy approved plans to strengthen South Vietnam's elite military forces — Ranger, Airborne and Special Forces — and in May 1961, 400 U.S. Special Forces advisers and their equipment arrived to carry out that mission.

It wasn't until late 1961, however, that the CIA/SF began a program which had the potential to defeat the North Vietnamese Army and Viet Cong in the field.

The idea was to train minority groups in Vietnam, which comprised about 75 percent of the interior's population, to defend themselves against Viet Cong attack. A local hamlet militia would be formed for self defense, and later these groups would conduct limited offensive operations and act as a reserve for regular Vietnamese forces.

The pilot operations, called the Area Development Program, began in the village of Buon Enao — home of the Montagnard Rhade tribe. Special Forces Detachment A-113, a few CIA advisers, and troops of Vietnamese elite units trained the "Yards" in weapons handling and guerrilla tactics. Combined with their own bush skills, these rugged hill people were so effective against the communists that the program expanded into what would become the largest unconventional warfare operation in Vietnam — the Civilian Irregular Defense Group (CIDG).

U.S. Army Special Forces had found their proper niche in Southeast Asia — training indigenous troops to fight communist insurgents. By late 1962 the CIDG program included 200 villages, 12,000 defenders and 26 SF "A" teams. (An A team is the basic operational unit of the Special Forces. Commanded by a captain, the 12-man group consists of specialists trained in communications, weapons, engineering, intelligence and medicine. The men are all cross-trained in at least one other field, and many are double or triple linguists. SF "B" teams, led by a major, control four A teams; C teams, actually SF battalions, are

SWCS courses have greatly increased in recent years, and the numbers are still growing. More than 5,400 students were enrolled in courses during 1987, and by the end of 1988 the number of students reached 8,600. Because of the hundreds of jobs being created to fill new Special Forces positions, officials are projecting 14,500 students will train annually at SWCS by 1990.

To understand how SWCS handles this load, we need to examine the following areas of special operations training:

- Assessment and Selection
- Special Forces
- Special Operations Advanced Skills
- Psychological Operations, or PsyOps

**Special Forces instructors demonstrate hand-to-hand combat techniques. They must learn their lessons well, because part of their mission is to pass their knowledge along.**



commanded by a lieutenant colonel and control three B teams.)

Although the CIDG program continued to grow — with over 75,000 irregulars by 1964 — the role of the Special Forces began to change as of October 1963.

In January 1964, Special Forces operations came under the command of MACV/SOG (Military Assistance Command, Vietnam/Studies and Observation Group), which in turn was controlled by the Special Assistant for Counterinsurgency and Special Activities (SACSA), all of which were answerable to the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) at the Pentagon. Its ostensible mission was to study lessons learned during the advisory experience; its real mission was to continue running classified, covert operations in Southeast Asia.

Arguments abound as to what the Special Forces mission in Vietnam should or should not have been, but the inception of SOG shifted SF ops toward a more participatory role. The commanders of SOG, Colonels Blackburn and Simons, did outstanding jobs during their tours, but it must be remembered that they answered first to more functionally minded senior officers, and second to politicians attuned to political battlefields.

SOG itself was divided into a variety of individual "study groups," each responsible for a specific area of operations. Psychological Studies Group (Oplan/Ops 33) sent false radio broadcasts into North Vietnam from transmitters in Hue and Tay Ninh; Air Studies Group (Ops 32) airdropped agents into enemy-held areas and operated their own air force, the 90th Special Operations Wing, piloted by Nationalist Chinese and CIA Air America pilots; Maritime Studies Group organized com-

mando raids along the North Vietnamese coast and in the Mekong Delta (Oplan 34A and Ops 31, respectively); but it was the Ground Studies Group which was assigned the largest mission.

Ground Studies Group (Oplan 35) was composed of SF and other U.S. special unit personnel, South Vietnamese elite troops, CIDG, Nung mercenaries, North Vietnamese and Viet Cong deserters, and other "specialists." It conducted cross-border intelligence operations — Operation "Kit Cat" into North Vietnam, "Prairie Fire" in Laos in 1965, and "Daniel Boone" into Cambodia in 1966, among others — and monitored the locations of downed airmen for potential escape and evasion raids. GSG also ran a host of "black missions," some of which leaked to the press causing, to put it mildly, consternation about certain SF operations.

Special Forces personnel were so immersed in this hodge-podge of clandestine activity that later on, when they were assigned to SOG, they were given the ponderous cover assignment, "Special Operations, Augmented, 5th Special Forces Group."

By now, Special Forces, although still very much involved in the training/advisory role, found themselves involved in operations perhaps better left to other government or military agencies/units.

The original and most successful mission of SF as trainers and advisers to the indigenous Indochinese population slid further down the list of priorities as the United States began its major military build-up in the mid-'60s. Special Forces personnel, specially trained in covert, special warfare operations, were increasingly tasked with routine intelligence-gathering and other missions well within the capabilities of Army Ranger,

Navy SEAL, and Marine Reconnaissance Battalion patrols.

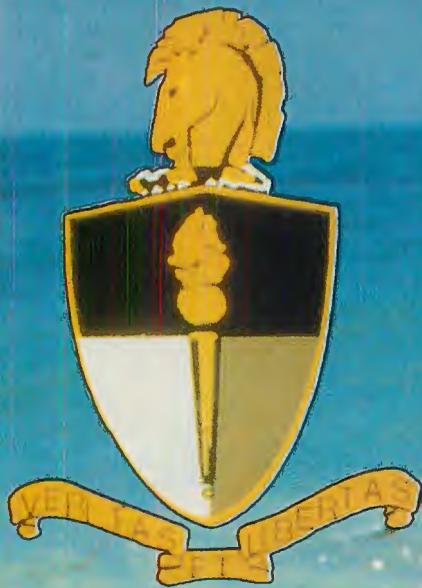
The problem was partly obviated by the formation of the MACV RECONDO (Reconnaissance Commando) school at Nha Trang under the auspices of the 5th Special Forces Group in September 1966. Its purpose was to train CIDG, U.S. LRRP (Long Range Reconnaissance Patrol) teams and other allied forces whose mission it was to conduct deep reconnaissance — a training task very well-suited to SF capabilities.

By 1968 SF strength was more than 2,500 men comprising some 80 A teams, 16 B teams and five C teams. Authorized SF strength in 1969 topped at 3,740 and they controlled about 40,000 irregular troops.

On 1 March 1971, the official role of Special Forces in Vietnam ended when the 5th Special Forces Group was deployed home to Ft. Bragg. SF troopers weren't finished in Vietnam, however, as some were called back during the March 1972 NVA/VC offensive to coordinate air strikes against the enemy. SF troops were also involved in training Cambodian troops between February and November 1972 to counter the same NVA thrust.

There's little doubt that Special Forces remained active in Vietnam until the end in 1975, and in Southeast Asia for some time after that. Their presence ended much as it had begun — in the role of advisers and trainers to indigenous forces. Had they and the other special operations units sent to Vietnam in the advisory role been allowed to fully develop that mission exclusively, there might be fewer of their names engraved on the Wall in Washington.

—John Coleman and Don McLean



- Civil Affairs
- International Studies
- Foreign Language
- SERE/Combating Terrorism
- NCO Academy

#### Assessment and Selection

Selection is tough and getting tougher. Until recently, a typical class might begin the selection process with 280 candidates but graduate only 70 of the originals. Since training these soldiers is expensive, SWCS added a physically and mentally demanding three-week test called Special Forces Assessment and Selection (SFAS). SFAS is designed to weed out the unwanted before the formal training begins. Unlike students in other "tough guy" schools in the American military, Special Forces candidates are

treated as adults. They are not subjected to harassment or pep rallies. The candidates must make it without external motivation. The current attrition rate for SFAS is 50 percent. Those who make it win the right to attend the "Q" course.

#### Special Forces

The Special Forces Qualification course is still the focal point of SWCS. The "Q" course produces the Army's "Green Berets" and is therefore the school's most important program of instruction. SWCS claims the graduates are a special breed of soldier: rugged, highly trained, capable of independent thought and action, and able to handle the most sensitive missions.

Execution of these missions calls for sound judgement, and the Special Forces



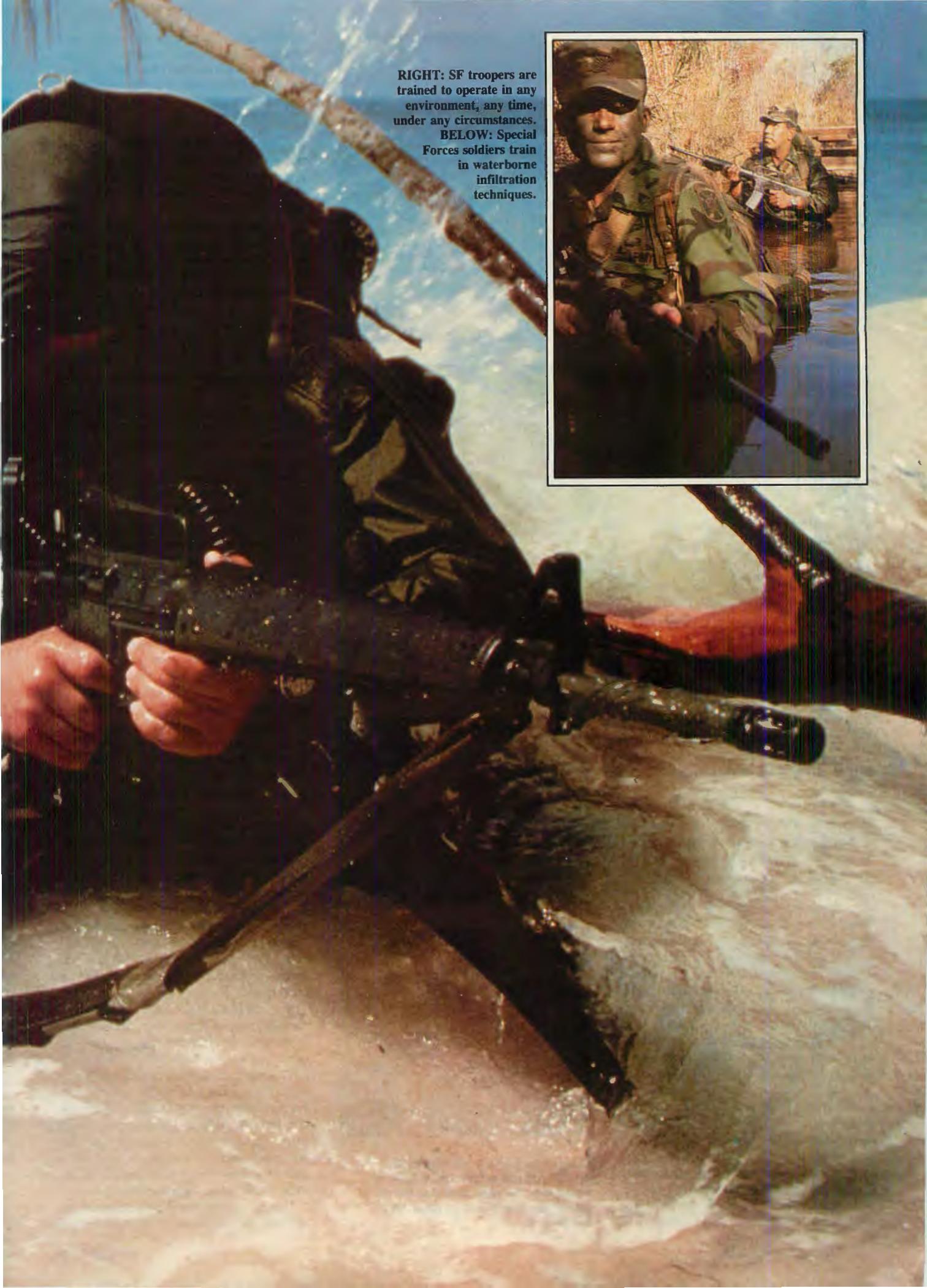
**ABOVE:** Anti-terrorist training is designed for SF personnel serving overseas on advisory, peacekeeping or training missions — for good reason.

**RIGHT:** Medical training is realistic and intense, as a Special Forces medic may be responsible for the care of many people outside his own A detachment.



**RIGHT:** SF troopers are trained to operate in any environment, any time, under any circumstances.

**BELOW:** Special Forces soldiers train in waterborne infiltration techniques.





**Patrol checks in with base. SF troopers are well versed with various weapons, as shown here, and would normally be required to impart that knowledge to indigenous forces.**



**ABOVE: Target interdiction team, better known as snipers.**

**RIGHT: Guts and grim determination.**

seek mature soldiers. Officers must wait until their fourth year of service before attending the "Q" course. Most come from the combat arms branches of the Army; 70 percent are from the infantry. Enlisted candidates are normally sergeants with a minimum of three years of service; many come from the Ranger battalions. These sergeants must also have a high enough score on the military intelligence test that they would qualify to be officers. All volunteers must be jump qualified, possess a secret clearance and pass the fitness and swim tests.

The "Q" course has three phases: common skills, specialty training, and a field exercise called "Robin Sage." The common skills portion lasts five weeks and stresses self-discipline, patrolling, survival, close combat and air operations. It boasts of having the toughest land navigation course in America.

Specialty training prepares the students for their subsequent assignment to a 12-man "A" detachment. Students are separated into one of the following specialties: offi-



**Communications are essential to SF operations, and technical skills must be honed to a fine edge, including the use of foreign equipment and cryptographic techniques.**

cer, weapons, communications, engineering and medical. The medical training is particularly intense and lasts 21 weeks. The other specialty sub-courses are conducted in about 13 weeks.

The officer sub-course teaches operations, intelligence, foreign internal defense, and unconventional warfare techniques, tactics, and doctrine. Because an officer must employ the other members in his detachment, he is also given familiarization training in the other specialties. The focus of all officer training is leadership.

Radios are the lifeline of Special Forces and communicators learn to operate a variety of systems. They become experts in Morse code, antenna designs and avoidance of signal detection. They must also be proficient in encyphering and decyphering cryptographic codes.

Weapons sergeants are trained extensively in the use of foreign weapons. This training includes small arms, mortars, and anti-armor weapons. In unconventional warfare (UW), weapons sergeants are the principal trainers of guerrilla forces. They must be able to teach raw recruits marksmanship and small unit tactics.

Engineer students learn to build as well as destroy. Part of the instruction deals with construction and engineering techniques. The remainder of the course deals with explosives. Engineers learn how to use both domestic and foreign munitions. They are also taught how to make homemade devices.

Most of the medical training is conducted at the Academy of Health Sciences at Fort Sam Houston, Texas. The curriculum includes subjects such as basic dentistry, surgery, obstetrics, and veterinary science. The academic environment is intense, and students must get up at 0430 and take physical training. The Training Company Commander, Major (Dr.) Rocky Farr, states: "Put the average medical student on our schedule and he probably couldn't make it." Neither does the average Special Forces candidate. The reason this sub-course is so demanding is that a graduate may later become the "doctor" for an isolated "A" detachment or for thousands of Third World citizens.

The last phase of the "Q" course is field training exercise Robin Sage. This exercise is designed to integrate and test both the other phases. Students are organized into "A" detachments and are given a UW mission. The student "A" teams are infiltrated via parachute into a simulated hostile nation and link up with an indigenous guerrilla force. The students must train the guerrillas and assist them in conducting operations against an opposing force (normally an element of the 82nd Airborne Division).

Graduation follows Robin Sage and the students are awarded the coveted Special



**ABOVE:** Students in the Special Forces Qualification course begin a road march. Emphasis in SF training is on self-motivation and discipline; bringing out the ability to operate effectively — and alone.

Forces Tab, an arched-shaped insignia worn above the unit patch on the left shoulder. Since all the soldiers (even non“Q”-qualified support troops) assigned to a Special Forces unit wear a green beret, the SF Tab is today’s mark of distinction in the Special Forces. Most graduates are assigned to one of the Special Forces groups and join an “A” detachment. Schooling, however, is never complete in Special Forces, and a soldier will return to SWCS frequently during his career. Most soldiers make their first return trip to obtain an advanced skill.

#### Special Operations Advanced Skills

The most popular course offered by the Advanced Skills Department is Military Freefall. The purpose of this form of skydiving is to evade radar detection while infiltrating. What makes Military Freefall more difficult than sport skydiving is that it is done at higher altitudes (as high as 25,000 to 35,000 feet) and is usually performed at night. In addition, jumpers are often loaded down with more than 100 pounds of gear (weapon, rucksack, parachute and oxygen system) and they must land together as a team. The five-week course also teaches students High-Altitude-High-Opening. The parachute used with this technique allows three feet of lateral movement for each foot of descent. By opening their parachutes shortly after exiting the airplane, jumpers are able to glide miles to reach their objective.

The Combat Diver course at Key West, Florida, is said to be the most physically demanding course of training in the U.S. Army. The attrition rate is so high that Special Forces Groups conduct two-to-three week pre-scuba courses to prepare the soldiers they send. The Combat Diver course is four weeks long and teaches students how to conduct long-range underwater operations, the use of open- and closed-SCUBA gear, and underwater search techniques.

Classes for a new six-week course, the Waterborne Infiltration course, will begin in January at Key West. Some of the critical tasks for this course are the completion of a 10,000-meter surface swim, a 50-nautical-mile rubber-boat transit, a 22-nautical-mile kayak transit, and a realistic “fly-away” field training exercise. At the end of the

course students will be able to conduct operations by integrating waterborne delivery methods with other means of infiltration, such as aircraft, surface vessels and submarines.

A better name for the six-week Target Interdiction course would be the Advanced Sniper School. The course emphasizes concealment, surveillance, and stalking. It goes beyond the normal sniper mission of killing personnel targets. According to the program’s former director, Captain John Stanley, “A special operations sniper must be just as proficient with a .50-caliber special-purpose sniper rifle, interdicting a material target, as he is training a group of guerrillas



**Special Forces instructor gives a class on how to build various homemade fish traps.**



**Four students in the SERE course extracted via STABO — Stabilized, Tactical, Airborne Body Operation. Photo: U.S. Army by Kirk Wyckoff**

equipped with a foreign or antique sniper weapon.” This is a “hands-on” program and students spend only 41 of the 340 hours in a classroom.

Before they become master sergeants, all Special Forces NCOs must attend the 12-week Operations and Intelligence course. The purpose of this course is to develop team sergeants who are capable of performing ops and intell duties for A (team), B (company) or C (battalion) detachments or act as the intelligence officer or the operations officer for a large network of guerrilla forces.

#### Psychological Operations

Marshal Shaposhnikov, a Soviet leader in World War II, offered a good reason for conducting Psychological Operations (PsyOps): “The prerequisite of victory is to make proper preparations in the enemy camp so that the result is decided before the battle begins.” PsyOps is a mass-casualty-producing weapon that is often underestimated. The PsyOps Department trains both officers and enlisted in how to monitor, assess, and influence the mental outlook of enemy countries. Students are also taught methods of hardening the resolve of friendly forces and how to detect enemy deception campaigns.

#### Civil Affairs

Civil Affairs units assist deployed U.S.

*Continued on page 80*

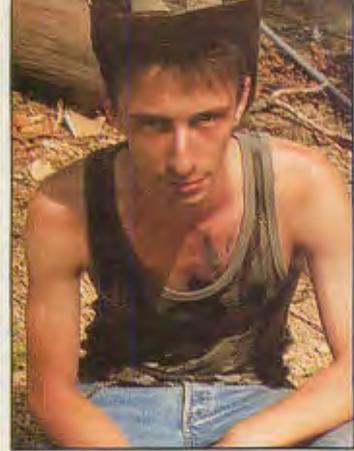
SOF Correspondent  
Lance Motley's Last Days  
in Burma

# KILLED IN ACTION

by Alain Haas  
Translated by Alex McColl

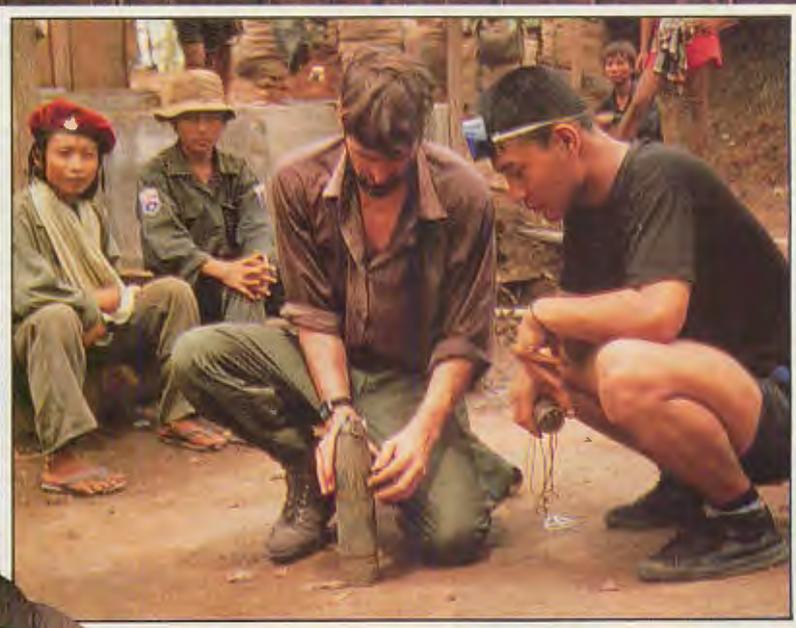
BELOW: Fatally wounded Lance Motley is transported by Karens across the Moei River into Thailand. Photo: Alain Haas



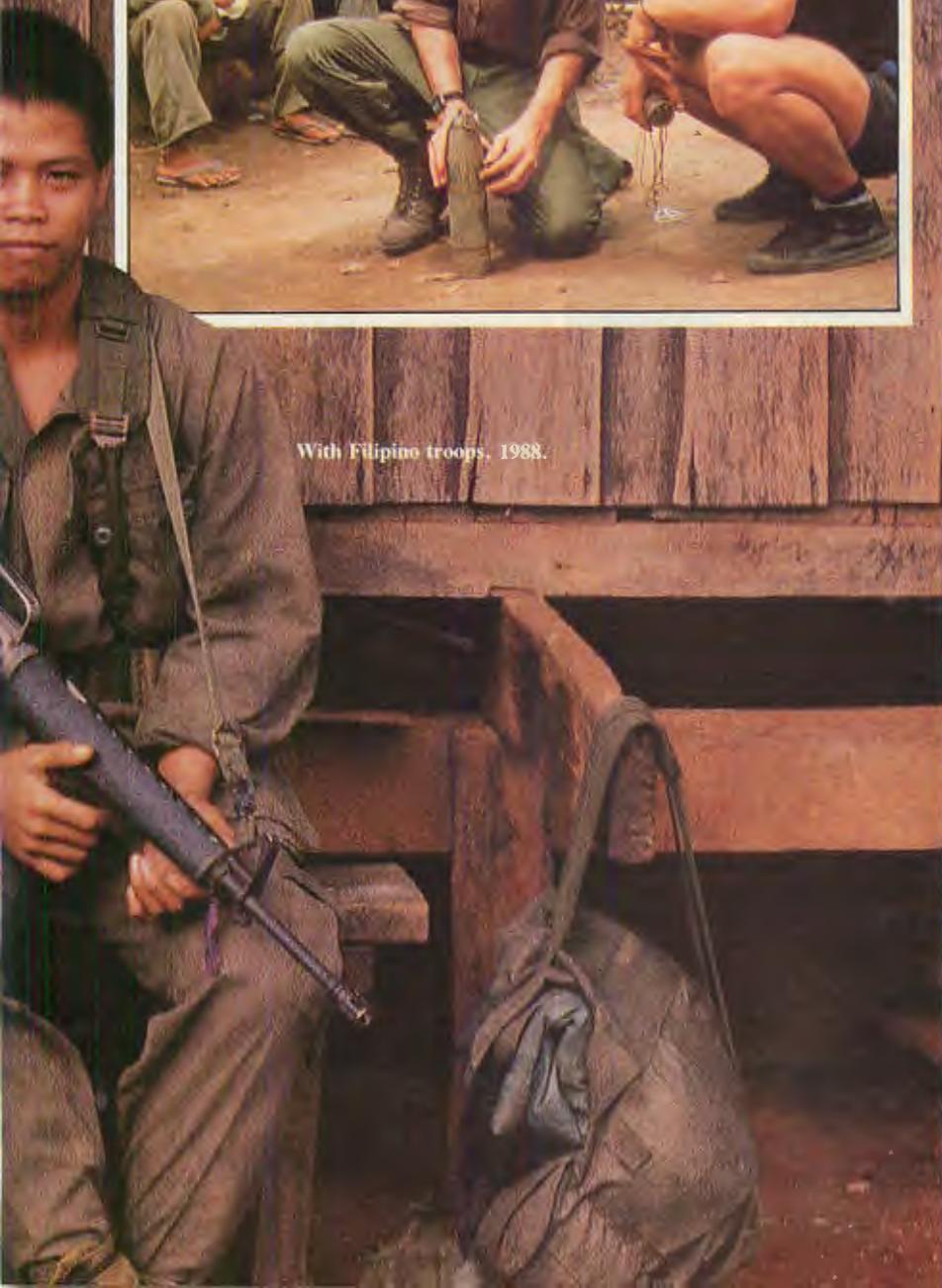


LEFT: French journalist Alain Haas, who was with Motley at the Karen camp.

BELOW: Lance Motley, who wrote under the nom de plume of Gene Seroft for security reasons, on his last assignment for *Soldier of Fortune*. He was covering the Karen rebels in Burma when a Burmese mortar bomb impacted next to him. Photo: Alain Haas



With Filipino troops, 1988.



*Editor's note: When we received the first sketchy details of Lance Motley's death on the Thai-Burmese border, we heard that he had been with a French photographer when he was killed. Managing Editor Jim Graves spent a week on the phone talking to contacts in Bangkok trying to find out the Frenchman's name. At about the same time we finally learned it was Alain Haas, Haas called us from Paris and said he had photographs of Lance. Graves asked him to write up the story; Haas said it would be in French; Graves said no problem and turned the manuscript over to our resident expert on almost everything, Alex McColl, for translation.*

*What follows is the true story of Lance Motley's last assignment.*

I'VE been at the hotel in Mae Sot for two nights when I meet Lance. He has just come in from Bangkok by the night bus. He definitely has a military look about him and later I find out that he is not a tourist.

In his room he tells me that he works for *Soldier of Fortune*. I tell him that the night before at Mae Sot we had heard the sounds of combat. As we found out later, on 27 May at 0300 the Burmese army had sent a battalion to assault the camp at Komura, obviously to no effect. Lance absolutely insists on going to see his Karen contact. This works out fine because I know the way, so I go with him. En route I explain to him that it will be difficult to get across (into Burma). The night before I had already been turned down by the officer in charge of journalists. Lance tells me to let him have a try at convincing them. In any event, if the answer is no, with the map that they had given me, we could work out a way to get over by ourselves. It was then that I found out that Lance was a former soldier, with impressive credentials: 82nd Airborne and the Rangers. He had been discharged as a captain — not bad at all in five years. We make a good pair, he an ex-Ranger and I a former French paratrooper.

When we find the address, we have another disappointment: Major "X" is sleeping. We are asked to sit down and don't waste any time going to sleep ourselves, Lance because of his night sitting up on the bus, and I because of the noise of combat across the border the night before.

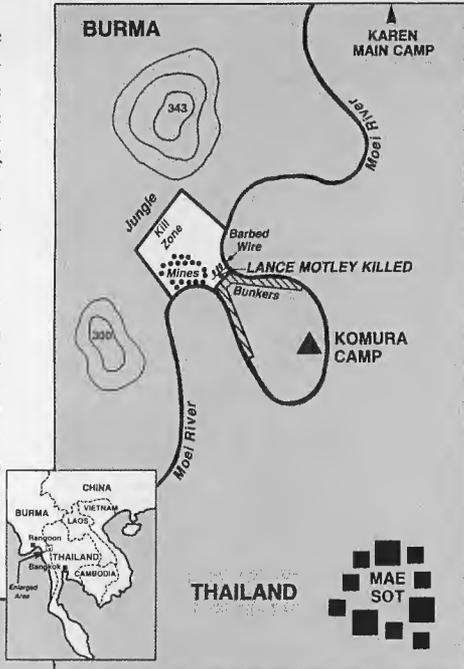
Fortunately a Karen comes to our aid with coffee, followed by a Burmese student who is a refugee here. This is where we are told for the first time that the Burmese make a practice of drugging their soldiers before sending them into combat. At the time we think that it is simply propaganda for our consumption. Eventually the major wakes up and asks us to come up to his office, apologizing for the wait. The night before he, also, had not had much sleep. In the end, Lance doesn't have much difficulty persuading him to let us through.

So we are on our way to the Komura

camp. Almost immediately the vehicle leaves the road and starts going down various jungle paths. First stop is a refugee camp. We are told to wait, another vehicle will take us the rest of the way. It is a long wait. We rig our hammocks in the wreck of a bamboo house. After two hours of waiting, Lance begins to get impatient. Finally a truck comes by.

"Damn! Thai Rangers."

They pass on by and I don't think they saw us. Just in case, we put our rucksacks in a less visible spot. [The Thai government discourages visits by journalists to Karen-controlled areas by having the Rangers arrest them for illegal border crossing.] Finally a pickup arrives and we get in the back. It's a rough road and we have to hang on. Thankfully not for long, and then we dismount. A short walk down a trail and



here we are on the bank of the Moei River. On the other side the fortified camp of Komura.

Lance is so eager to get across that he doesn't wait for the dugout which is coming for us. So he's going across on foot. It does not seem to be too deep. I follow him, but the problem is that where the water is up to his waist, it is up to my chest. Lance turns and sees me thus. It strikes him as funny and he goes on his way chuckling. At a point where he has almost made it to the other side he loses his footing and goes headlong into

**Komura camp. Motley was wounded by a Burmese mortar bomb on 30 May 1989, and transported across the Moei River to Mae Sot in Thailand where he subsequently died from his wounds on 31 May.**

## LANCE EUGENE MOTLEY 1957-1989

I was at home when Lynne, our receptionist, called and told me Lance was dead. In those few seconds before I could answer her, I had one of those weird, real-as-reality flashbacks, the kind where the subconscious kicks in and plays it right in front of your mind's eye.

We were at a party over at our managing editor's house. Lance and I were in the kitchen talking editorial nonsense and the topic changed to his upcoming trip to Southeast Asia, to Burma to cover the Karen rebels. He was excited about it. He was kind of burned out on Central and South America, and was ready for a new adventure. After which, he told me, he was looking forward to coming home to attend his 10-year class reunion at the military academy at West Point.

He made it, because that's where they buried him.

I met Lance a few years ago for the first time when we shared a plane ride down to Central America. He'd come to our notice back in 1986 when, out of the blue, we got a couple of stories from him based on a trip he'd taken deep inside Afghanistan with the mujahideen, to the city of Herat near the Iranian border. He hadn't gone there to write, but to fight against the Soviets. He stayed with the muj for a number of months doing just that, until he was wounded.

Afterward he trekked for 50 days, often alone, out of Afghanistan. As far as anyone knows, he was the only American to have reached Herat since the Soviets invaded in 1979. The Afghans nicknamed Lance the "Bearded Mystic" and respected his courage and fighting spirit. He hadn't been on anyone's payroll, and hadn't gone there with the intention of writing any articles. He'd just gone to see what it was all about. Five years as an officer with the Army's

82nd Airborne and 75th Rangers — in a peacetime environment — hadn't been enough for him. So, instead of jaunting off to someplace like Europe for a little post-Army R&R, he opted for Afghanistan. That should tell you something about the guy.



**Ranger Lieutenant Lance Motley, U.S. Army.**

I got to know him pretty well during our weeks together in Honduras. Lance, Steve Salisbury, who was then our Central America correspondent, and I shared a cramped hotel room in Tegucigalpa. We were working on placing Lance with the contras, an arrangement that was already supposed to have been made but wasn't. By day two, Lance was getting antsy and calling the local contra contacts "silly sonsabitches." By day four he was ready to walk to the border contra camps. By day six he was ready to machine gun somebody. He wasn't ready for the manana mentality, never was and never would be.

Lance needed to have things happen now if not sooner. He couldn't abide anyone who wouldn't make a decision. He'd drive rear-echelon military types

from Salvador to the Philippines batty because when he wanted to go into the field he wouldn't accept a bureaucratic put-off. They didn't care for him much, but that didn't bother Lance a whit.

Where he wanted to be was in the bush with the troops, the closer to combat the better, and those guys liked him a lot. Not just because he had the guts to come out with them and face whatever form of death they had to face, and hump the same miserable backwater jungles and mountains, and eat the same bit of dried fish or ball of rice, and drink the same foul water when there was any — but because he was also a damned fine soldier and leader and they were quick to recognize that in him.

He had a lot to teach about the art of soldiering, and he liked to teach real soldiers — not the kind who dress up and play at it, but the scraggly, bush-whacked-tired type whose one possession that isn't encrusted with six weeks worth of crud is his rifle. He got along with that kind of soldier because he was a mirror reflection of them, and they'd listen to what he had to say and teach. Right now, as you read this, there are soldiers and freedom fighters around the world who are still alive because of what Lance Eugene Motley, soldier/correspondent, taught them.

After we published Lance's articles on Afghanistan, we picked him up as a freelancer and sent him to places he probably would've gone anyway: Nicaragua, the Philippines, Honduras, Guatemala, El Salvador, Peru and Colombia. Combat reporting was his forte, but if even Lance couldn't break down the star-studded bureaucratic barriers to get into the field, he'd still find a way to file reports on elite units, military tactics, treasure hunting, gold mining, the emerald trade and cocaine trafficking. Anything that fell under the term "adventure" was fair game for Lance and his camera and pen, not really so much that

the water. Now we're both chuckling. The Karens think this is very odd.

A soldier leads us to the camp headquarters. Once there, the camp commander, a Major Saw Than Mawng, briefs us on the situation:

"The situation here is very good; in the last month we have driven off two major attacks. The first on 22 May. The Burmese crossed the border to make a night attack on our positions from the rear. But they could not get a foothold on the side of the river where the camp is. We estimate that we put about half a battalion out of action, not counting any killed by the Thai shelling. [Burmese long rounds landing in Thai territory occasionally draw counter-fire.] Unfortunately for us a lot of bodies were washed away by the strong current in the Moei River, which kept us from recovering very much in the way of weapons and ammunition.

he was a committed writer, but more for the fact that he was a committed adventurer — a rare breed in this world of Foggy Bottom pin-stripes and Wall Street warriors.

I'm not really sure, though, just what Lance was adventuring after. He never mentioned, at least to me, what he was hoping to find at the end of the rainbow. I don't think he really knew himself, but then he was only 31, nearly 32, when he made the trip across to Southeast Asia. I tend to think he was just having a good, up-close look at life while he was still young. He wanted to see it for himself rather than relying on somebody else's version. He wasn't afraid of living, as so many others are. He certainly wasn't afraid of death, either; the thought that death might find him early just never bothered him.

When word reached us from Thailand that Lance had been killed, Bob Brown and SOF associates Mike Williams and Paul Fanshaw immediately took off to find out what had actually happened. Initial press reports had him victim of a land mine, but we weren't sure. All we really knew was that he had been with the Karen rebels when it happened. We didn't know then that French journalist



Lance Motley with mujahideen. From this trip came his first two features for SOF in 1986.

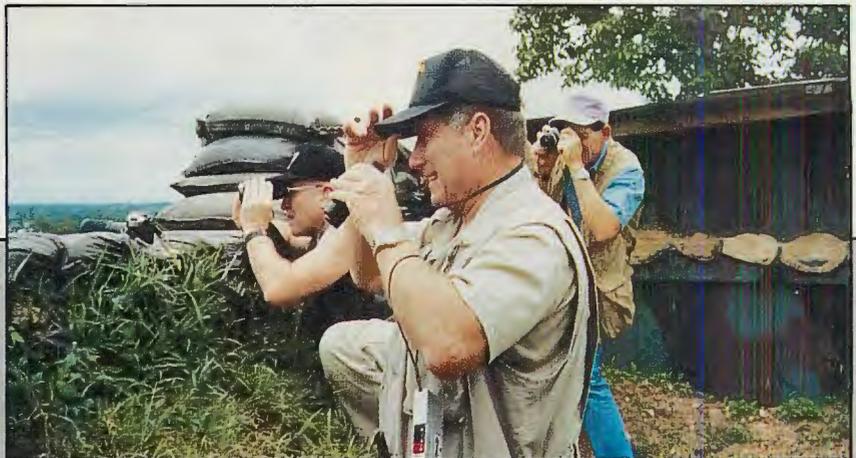
The most recent attack was last night, and was another defeat for them. We recovered more than 50 individual weapons and found 56 bodies in the barbed wire."

Lance asks: "And your losses?"

"Four killed and six wounded in the first attack and none in the second."

Lance seems skeptical and asks to see the Burmese bodies. The commander details a soldier to guide us across the camp. En route through the position of the 101st Battalion,

Lance asks why this battalion is "special." They tell us it is special because it is under the direct control of the Karen GHQ in Mawpokey and also, there are French officers in the unit, but we don't know whether we can see them. We pause for a talk with the captain commanding this detachment of the 101st. He tells about the death of Olivier, who was killed during a shelling two weeks before. He was a former French officer. We don't push the conversation



As soon as word reached us that Lance had been killed, SOF Editor/Publisher Bob Brown (middle), and SOF associates Mike Williams (foreground) and Paul Fanshaw headed to the Thai-Burmese border to investigate the circumstances. This shot was taken at the Thai Ranger camp across from Komura before they moved into Komura itself.

Alain Haas was on-site, and would provide us with the article that accompanies this piece.

Brown and the others traveled to the Karen enclave where Lance was wounded, and conducted their own investigation as to exactly what happened. A nagging question that Lance had somehow been set up had to be laid to rest. It was.

As far as we can ascertain, Lance was simply in the wrong place at the wrong time, and that happens in war. That may sound callous, but if you've been in combat you know exactly how capricious and callous death can be. There rarely seems to be any rhyme or reason as to who gets killed and who walks away. Death makes very little distinction when men are trying to kill each other; it just scoops up a handful, never letting us forget that the same thing will happen again tomorrow, and the day after that. It's happened to four other SOF freelancers: George Bacon in Angola, Mike Echanis in Nicaragua, Almerigo Grilz in Mozambique, and Peter Bertie in Nicaragua.

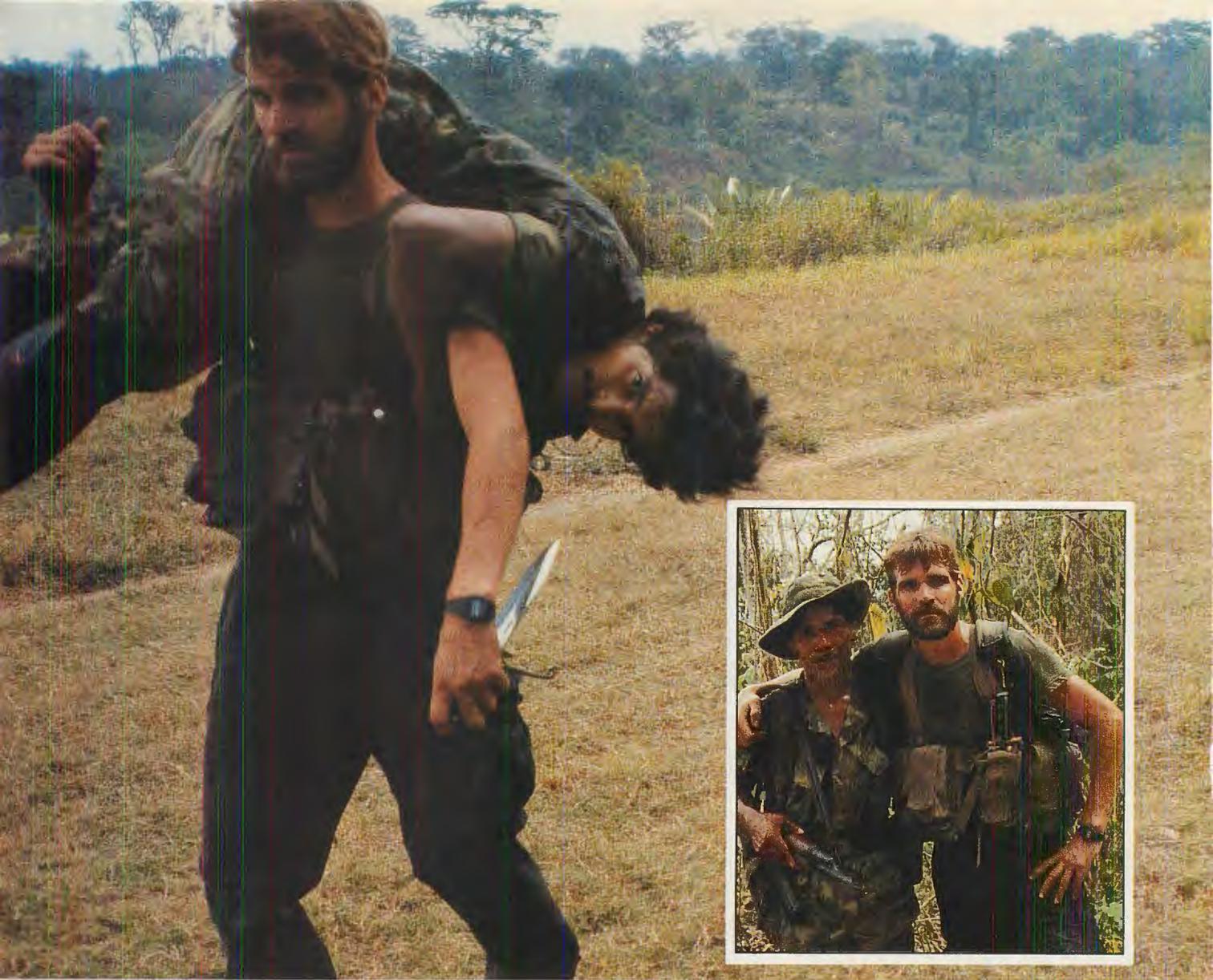
Lance was doing his job — photographing the Karen defenses — when a mortar bomb impacted next to him. Haas believes he was specifically targeted be-

cause he was in the open; that may or may not be the case and we'll never know for sure. The only person who could tell us that would be the Burmese forward observer directing fire on the Karen position. Whether it was a random harassment-and-interdiction round or plotted fire becomes a moot point because the damage was done and Lance died from it the next day.

As I've done with many other friends who have been killed in combat, I ask the question "what if" about Lance: What if he hadn't been killed? Where would he be next month, or next year? What would he be doing? One thing I know for certain — he'd be at the sharp end in combat somewhere in this world, teaching young soldiers how to stay alive. He'd be as tired and as hungry and thirsty as the rest, but he'd keep driving on. He'd be out on point, probably under fire, shooting photos, and later, when everyone else had shagged out, he'd be sitting under a poncho writing up his notes by flashlight.

Lance Motley was on his way toward becoming one of the world's best combat correspondents, and I'm damned glad we were able to help him along. Whether the job would have palled for him in time is something we'll never know; the adventure and camaraderie of combat may have been only a stepping stone toward whatever he would have chosen as his final calling.

We'll never know now what that would have been, except that it would never be dull. Lance Motley had too much life in him for that. — John Coleman



with the captain any further, seeing the emotion on his face. Apparently he and Olivier were close. Lance is disappointed; he had been hoping to meet one of these freedom fighters.

As we arrive at the front line an incoming rifle grenade explodes and a 12-year old child is wounded, hit in the leg and the shoulder. Lance insists on seeing the bodies of the Burmese. We pass through the wire, escorted by the Karens. I am nervous because the Burmese troops are not far away. Lance is entirely relaxed. A Karen opens fire. We get behind the shelter of the front line berm. We have not seen any Burmese soldiers but decide to be prudent and continue touring the camp.

It's about here that we look at a grenade launcher. The Karens tell us that it is Burmese made. It is an old Lee-Enfield modified. Lance is greatly interested in the grenade. He is not acquainted with the type, but the markings seem to indicate British manufacture. The oddest bit is that the date of manufacture is 1/89. Now the Karens captured these grenades in March. Lance is thinking out loud that a mere three months after their manufacture is altogether too soon for them to have passed

Carrying a wounded contra, 1987.

through the black market. Therefore they did in fact capture them.

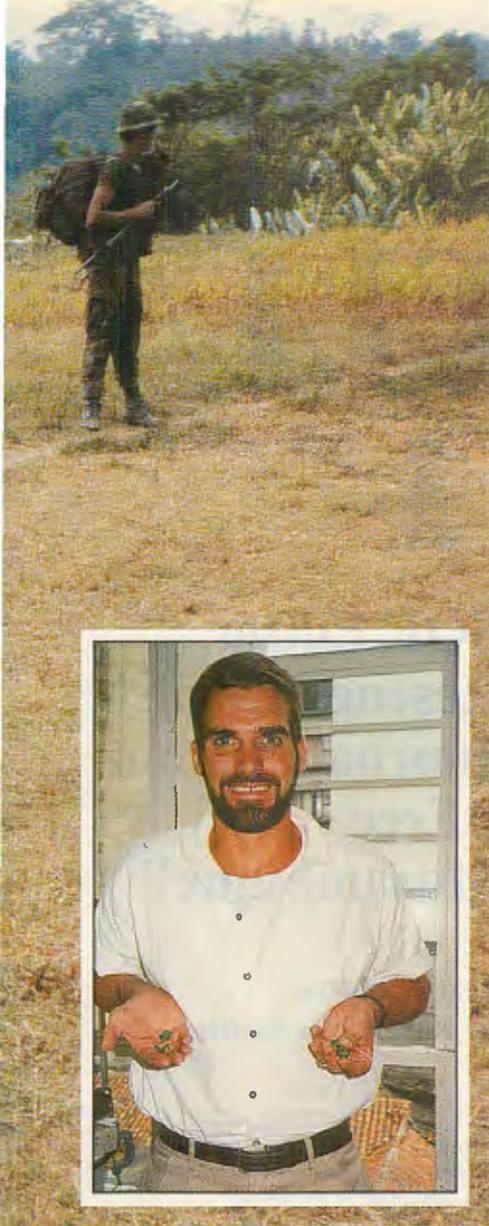
Our guide leads us further into the interior of the camp. Here everything is in ruins; none of the buildings have been spared by the Burmese artillery. I ask the Karen why this area has been beat up worse than the others.

"It's very simple," he explains. "The building over there is the sawmill and the people who work there live in these houses. The Burmese are trying to cut off our main source of revenue, which is teak. At this time, the Rangoon regime has a policy of terror against the people who work for us or help us. In the areas which they have taken from us this past year, the villages have been systematically destroyed and the people massacred."

A radio call interrupts. The camp commander invites us to join him at dinner. This is fine with us as we are famished. The meal is ample: rice, dried fish, sardines in tomato-paste. Lance discusses strategy with the major. The Karens have lost several positions

With the contras, 1987.

along the border, but the Burmese have suffered heavy casualties in the process of taking them. Probably they will not be able to hold them during the rainy season because the logistical system that gives them the advantage will bog down as the roads wash out. The Karens don't have this problem. They are at home here, they know these mountains and this land by heart, they are rugged soldiers motivated by their fight for freedom, and they are accustomed to living in the jungle, with the jungle. On the other hand the Burmese are mostly forcibly enlisted (i.e., press-ganged) and often very young. The bodies we saw prove this; they could not have been more than 16. The major tells us that the morale of the Burmese troops is so low they have to drug them. This is the second time this has been mentioned. Is it true? Lance and I begin to seriously consider the possibility. The bodies that we saw were in a place that defies all military logic — in the open next to the barbed wire that they had just crossed. Now the wire had not been cut anywhere; apparently they planned to climb



Covering the emerald trade in Colombia, 1989.

it like an ordinary fence. Tomorrow we shall return and interview the soldiers defending this sector.

The night is calm, barely troubled by a few incoming mortar rounds, a harassment technique that doesn't have much effect on the Karens. In the morning we return to the front line to try to reconstruct the last Burmese attack. Lance begins by interviewing the sector commander. The Burmese made a frontal assault after an artillery preparation; they attacked with a whole battalion. The ratio of forces was therefore 3 to 1 in favor of the Burmese. Why had they not succeeded? The sector commander explains to us that the assault broke up in the barbed wire. This is incomprehensible since the wire consists of three fences about 1½ meters apart; these are simple fences of the kind used to keep in animals. It is very easy to go over them or under them. Further, the field of fire has not been cleared, so it is possible to get within about 50 meters of the bunkers without leaving cover. Now the impacts of RPGs or Karl

Gustavs which we found are either in the trees or well in front of the bunkers. Even at night you'd have to be pretty bad to miss. Lance interviews a soldier. He explains to us that, as usual, the Burmese regrouped before the assault in a streambed about 100 meters from here, then advanced under cover of mortar fire. Lance asks how they moved out in the assault. Simply walking, some of them at sling arms. The Karens let them get to the edge of the wire and opened fire when they started trying to climb over. We couldn't believe it. It's too simple. No one could make that kind of mistake.

Since I am about the same height as an Asian, I go forward of the defensive line to find out how long it will take me to cover the last 50 meters. I get down beside a clump of bamboo as if getting ready to make the assault. Lance gives me the signal that he is ready. He is on top of one of the bunkers and the sector commander is with him. I rush forward, dive under the first fence, roll under the other two, rush forward and flatten myself against the bunker. It has taken me about 20 seconds. Lance gives me the OK signal. The demonstration is sufficient.

A mortar is fired. Apparently my little exercise has wakened the Burmese. I go behind the bunkers and join Lance who is talking in the trench. The shell goes too far. We return to the major's house for breakfast. Lance tells the major about the little experiment that we have just conducted. He agrees with us but says that in his opinion the Burmese drug their troops because that's the only way they can get them to make an assault. Only the officers stay lucid, and the soldiers are as if hypnotized. They don't cry out, even when wounded. According to him the Burmese drug them because they are press-ganged into the army, and it's even possible that they use students who are political prisoners for the first waves of the assault.

We spend the rest of the day visiting in the camp. Lance talks a lot with the Karens. I get the impression that he has a lot of sympathy for these people. It is true that their way of thinking is like ours. They are Christians and deeply anti-communist, which gives us a serious point in common. The day passes peacefully, barely troubled by a few incoming artillery rounds. Each time a round comes in Lance says, "Lucky in love, lucky in war." I wish I were as confident as he, but since I haven't had much luck with women I prefer to be cautious.

The next morning we make an interesting discovery. There is a Frenchman named Jacques fighting on the side of the Karens. At this time, unfortunately, he is down with a bout of malaria. The Karens have hidden him. They don't like this sort of publicity as the Thai government has given them some problems on this subject. For once it is I who acts as interpreter for Lance, since Jacques speaks hardly any English. I explain to Lance what Jacques has done the last 15 months, after fighting in Afghanistan. He has abandoned everything, even his passport. Today he is tired of fighting and worn down by the malaria, but what the

hell, he likes it here. I explain to Lance that for the time being he is too ill to tell us the rest of his story. In the afternoon Major Saw Thaw Mawng introduces us to a Burmese journalist who became a refugee in Thailand to escape the bloody repression of last year. He remains anonymous, signing his articles in the Bangkok Post with a pen name because his family stayed in Burma and, like the students, he's afraid that the Burmese government will take revenge on them. He was there during the attack on the night of the 27th. He was in the front line and tells us that it was a regular massacre. He plays the tape he made during the attack. It sounds like a training exercise. All we hear is the noise of weapons and the orders of the Karens. No shouting, nothing. Now when a battalion makes an attack, it makes some noise. Lance and I talk this over for a long time. Lance is more and more convinced that this story about drugs is true, and explains to me his reasons for believing so:

— First, militarily there is no other possible explanation for the failure of the assault on the night of the 26th and 27th.

— Second, the Karens are very strict in their religion and lying is a sin. He doesn't think that they are capable of lying.

— Third, everyone with whom we have talked has told us the same story without a single contradiction with which we could confront them.

We decide to spend the night in the bunkers of the front line. In case the Burmese attack we will be able to see things with our own eyes. It is the worst night since we have been here. It is stiflingly hot in the bunker and each time a shell hits the camp we get a face full of dirt.

On top of all that the Karens open fire whenever they hear a noise on the other side. Unfortunately, the Rangoon soldiers never launch an attack. Lance wakes me up in the morning. I cross off another day on my calendar; it is now the 30th. As usual we have breakfast with the major. Lance explains his impatience over the lack of activity to the major and asks his opinion as to when the Burmese will attack. The major doesn't know, since the rainy season is arriving and it is possible that they will retire soon, but they may try one final attack before they leave. But that's not certain as they have lost a lot of men. The prospect of no action doesn't make Lance happy.

For a change of pace we go for a swim in the Moei River, which gives us a good appetite. Today, it's rich with coconut for lunch, then a little siesta hardly troubled by the Burmese artillery. Finally, about 1500, the major tells us that their intelligence service predicts an attack that night. A broad smile lights up Lance's face. He is beginning to feel the lack of action. We move up to the front line to observe the preparations. En route we stop by the demolitions specialist to see how they prepare their booby traps and mines. Lance is greatly interested in these improvised gadgets but doesn't understand why the Karens use the word "deto"

*Continued on page 83*



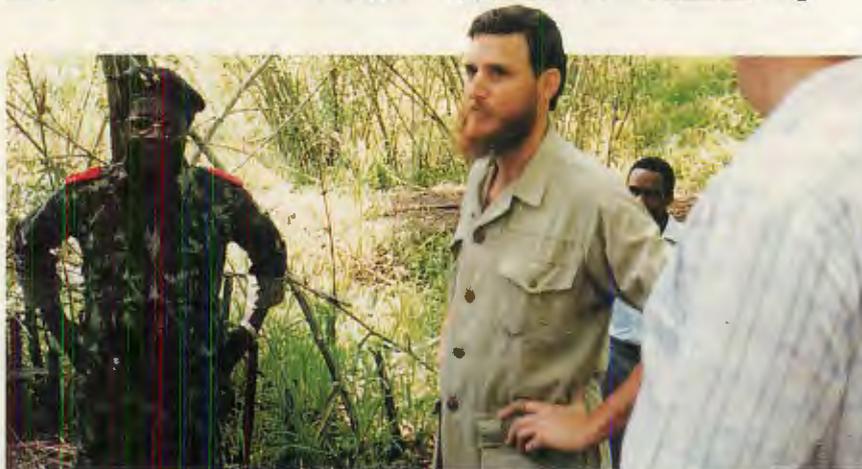
## SOF ADVENTURE

# MR. DELLA CASA, I

# PRESUME?

**SOF Editor  
Rescues English  
Journalist from  
“Free  
Mozambique”**

**Text & Photos  
by Robert MacKenzie**



**RENAMO President Afonso Dhlakama with bearded English journalist Nicholas della Casa, just prior to his release.**



### **SOLDIER'S SOLDIER**

Robert MacKenzie has been involved with the military most of his adult life.

He served with the 101st Airborne in Vietnam until an NVA bullet tore him up, resulting in discharge with a 70-percent medical disability. Undaunted,

**Author with German-made MG-34. RENAMO fights with what it's got — including machine guns manufactured in 1934.**

he headed for Rhodesia in 1970, joined C Squadron, Special Air Service, and rose from trooper to squadron commander, becoming the most highly decorated American to serve in the Rhodesian forces, winning the Bronze and Silver crosses for valor, along with the coveted SAS Wings on Chest.

When Rhodesia fell in 1980, he trekked south with most of the Rhodesian SAS contingent, and served 1½ years as a major with the South African Defence Force. He then went across to the Transkei Defence Force, serving in its special forces for another 3½ years.

Upon his return to the United States, MacKenzie became actively involved as a political consultant on southern African affairs, and has made numerous trips back to Africa in that capacity.

He has written a number of articles for SOF, and is one of our contributing editors for unconventional operations.

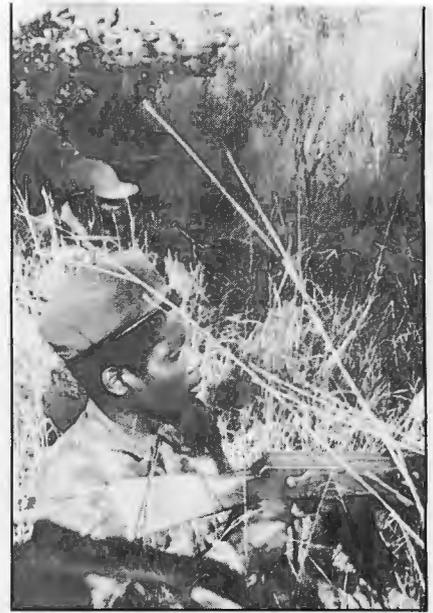
IT was 0630. Robert MacKenzie, executive director of Freedom, Inc., and contributing editor to *Soldier of Fortune*, was sound asleep. Of course, the phone had to ring. And it was an interesting way to start 7 November 1988.

The call was from the mother of Nicholas della Casa, an English journalist who had gone to Mozambique in June 1987 to do a story on the war for CBS, and who was still there, a captive of the RENAMO anti-communist guerrillas. Mrs. della Casa's story was not a complete surprise to MacKenzie since he had received a mysterious communication from Paris a few weeks earlier seeking information or assistance in the matter of Nicholas. After that call he had familiarized himself with the situation, but more out of interest than in the expectation of future involvement.

Mrs. della Casa's desperate plea changed that expectation. She related how she had given up hope of any official or even unofficial attempt by the British government or the International Red Cross to find and re-

lease her son. Trips to Africa by her future son-in-law and by other individuals had failed to produce any indication of Nick's whereabouts or possible release. Letters to a part-time RENAMO representative in Washington, D.C., Professor Louis Serapiao, had gone unanswered. Finally, she managed to contact a missionary who was one of a group escorted from the Mozambican war zone in August 1987 by MacKenzie (see "Mission Mozambique," *SOF*, Jan. '88). The missionary suggested that perhaps MacKenzie could arrange the release of her son and provided an out-of-date phone number. Mrs. della Casa soon had a current one.

That first conversation was a little strained. Both parties had good reason to believe that Nicholas was alive — in fact, RENAMO had been delivering mail to him during his captivity. Further, a group of major media journalists who had been flown into RENAMO headquarters in July 1988 had been allowed to visit Nick, and to make a video of him to take back to his family. (The cost of the charter flight into Mozam-



Author notes that RENAMO guerrillas are some of the most disciplined bush fighters in Africa, not only in terms of military tactics, but in their treatment of civilians as well.

## SITREP

While visiting Free Mozambique to arrange the release of Nicholas della Casa, I naturally took the opportunity to observe the military situation. The anti-communist guerrillas are winning, albeit slowly, and the communist regime continues to be supported by the U.S. State Department. Morale of the guerrillas is very high, they move freely throughout the countryside at will, and they are rarely challenged by government forces or the 20,000 foreign troops helping the communists stay in power.

A recent development of considerable significance is the withdrawal of the 8,000-man Tanzanian contingent. Frustrated by the Mozambican government's inability to conclude the war either by force of arms or by negotiation, and beset by severe economic problems of their own, the Tanzanians have concluded that they can no longer support their socialist neighbors. Tanzanian troops had garrisoned many Mozambican towns, thereby releasing local soldiers to fight the insurgents. The removal of these garrisons has meant that RENAMO (Mozambique National Resistance) in many instances has been able to walk in and take over.

Many who might be misled by the constant media campaign against RENAMO should realize that these freedom fighters are among the best-disciplined guerrillas in Africa. Penalties for actions against civilians are extremely harsh, and every foreign observer who has been to Free Mozambique has noted the good relationship between the civilians and the insurgents. Even the International Red Cross admits that no one is starving in guerrilla-controlled



areas, while people subject to the socialist policies of the government live in a perpetual state of famine. Allegations of widespread abuse of the civilian populace, or of guerrilla atrocities, are the result of a well-orchestrated propaganda campaign.

Perhaps one of RENAMO's greatest strengths is that they are not reliant on American aid. The contras were, and look what is happening to them. Jonas Savimbi in Angola allowed himself to become too dependent on U.S. supplies,

Siting in captured Soviet 14.5mm anti-aircraft gun. RENAMO has scored successes against enemy air power, forcing pilots to fly high — and ineffectively — during sorties.

and now the United States has made a deal with the Cubans without even inviting him to the talks.

Sometimes it appears that American aid is the "kiss of death" for our ideological allies in the fight against communist domination.



RENAMO has been accused by the Marxist FRELIMO government of massing hundreds of "uniformed" troops to "massacre" Mozambican civilians. As this photo shows, uniforms of any kind are in short supply; the author, based on his many trips inside Mozambique, has noted that RENAMO severely punishes any of its members who mistreat the locals.

bique was underwritten by Sir Harry Schultz, a co-founder of Freedom, Inc.) MacKenzie's own inquiries had confirmed that the captive was well, but that he was being held as a spy — not as an errand pressman. Mrs della Casa said that she had a sense of impending misfortune concerning her son, and could MacKenzie help get him out of guerrilla hands? Of necessity, the reply was noncommittal, as permission had to be sought from the chairman of Freedom, Inc., Larry Abraham.

Withing a very few hours Abraham had considered and consented to FI's involvement.

MacKenzie takes up the story himself:

As soon as Larry gave the green light, I contacted Tom Schaaf of the Mozambique Research Center in Washington, D.C. Of all the many people in the United States who purport to speak for or of RENAMO, Tom is the only one who can do so with authority and legitimacy. It was at his instigation that I got involved with the missionary release in 1987, and I had been to Mozambique with him in 1986 to visit the freedom fighters. Knowing his contacts were the best available, I asked him to forward a message to RENAMO headquarters, asking for the release of Mr. della Casa.

Nine days later I had a reply that his release was under consideration, but that

**Guerrillas rarely have access to state-of-the-art firepower. With RENAMO, if it shoots, it works, as evidenced by this Soviet PPS43 produced during World War II.**

message also listed several conditions, not all of which were practicable. One of them, for instance, was that della Casa could only be flown out of guerrilla territory. Cost notwithstanding (an "irregular" charter can go as high as \$30,000) there are a few other problems associated with finding the sort of pilots who will fly into a war zone through unauthorized airspace. Other conditions were very valid, such as a requirement that Nick not be allowed to travel through any place held by government forces. This both for RENAMO's protection and Nick's, as the Mozambique government is not noted for its kindly treatment of people with divergent views, and could possibly extract information of tactical value in their war against the guerrillas. On at least one occasion, claims RENAMO, a foreigner in their keeping who was released to the government was murdered. RENAMO got the blame for the murder and will therefore no longer entrust captives to the hands of the Marxist regime.

I immediately sent off another message, discussing the concerns of the first and sug-

**Sybil Cline of the U.S. Global Strategy Council accompanies RENAMO guides en route to meeting with Dhlakama and della Casa.**

gesting some possible alternatives, and started making plans to actually go to Mozambique. Knowing that a reply would be at least another nine days, I had time to enlist the help of Senator Jesse Helms in the form of a letter from him to the president of RENAMO, Afonso Dhlakama. Dhlakama considers Senator Helms, along with Senator Steve Symms and Representative Dan Burton, to be part of a very small group of American politicians with open minds on Mozambique, and I thought such a letter would be a strong card to play in winning della Casa's freedom. Senator Steve Symms offered to provide a similar letter.

Near the end of November I received a message stating that President Dhlakama would discuss the release of Mr. della Casa with me in person at a meeting to be arranged. No assurances were given, but I felt that I would not be asked to come unless Dhlakama intended to grant the request. By this time I was in Washington and replied that I was on my way. Leaving on 30 November, Sibyl Cline of the U.S. Global Strategy Council and I went first to London to meet with Mrs. della Casa, and then on to southern Africa. We arrived in the region on 3 December — still time to deliver a Christmas present to an anxious mother if all went well. Things rarely go well in Africa, however.

Our first destination was a city in one of



the most functional and friendly countries in Africa. Here final preparations would be made, including communication with the guerrillas to confirm meeting arrangements. Contacting a friend who would help with logistics, I learned that Tom Schaaf would also be arriving in a few days and that we should wait for him before continuing. Although I regretted the delay, I welcomed the prospect of Tom's company. When he arrived, though, he had an English journalist with him and the news that several other people would also be joining us over the next couple of days. This I viewed with some alarm, because while it is possible to keep a low profile with two or even three people, seven or eight makes it rather difficult. And in our case a low profile was essential. The larger our group became, the less likelihood there would be a successful clandestine infiltration into Mozambique.

The Mozambique government denies access to the guerrillas even for such humanitarian efforts as arranging the release of missionaries or journalists. The country we were now in, one of the most pragmatic and pro-West of any African country, is under tremendous pressure from its more powerful communist neighbor to prevent anyone from crossing its borders into what RENAMO calls "Free Mozambique." Further, like any sovereign country, this one, as friendly and hospitable as it is, takes a very dim view of people illegally entering or leaving its borders. All of which meant that our preparations had to be done covertly. The border with Mozambique, though, is so long and runs through such difficult terrain that it is impossible to police completely, and I was confident that we could get across somewhere. Eventually the group was assembled and we made our first attempt.

We would make a normal surreptitious border crossing on foot, after having traveled into the general area by four-wheel drive vehicle. Due to our increased numbers, and the less than athletic abilities of some members, our guide arranged to drive all the way into Mozambique and straight to the rendezvous, a mere five hours down dirt roads and across the bush. Error crept in when we arrived at 0100 and found no sign of the guerrillas who should have been there. We did find some villagers who understandably wondered what we were doing and insisted that they accompany us to the police for an explanation. They were not quite insistent enough though, and we drove away after a brief discussion. We aborted attempt number one.

Number two took place the next night after we had once again contacted the guerrillas and ensured that all would go according to plan. It didn't. Arriving at the now clearly defined meeting place at 2300, we still found no one to meet. By 0200 nobody had arrived, so we left. Five bloody hours back to our base before we could grab a quick nap. So much for the second attempt.

A very apologetic message from the guerrillas arrived that day saying that they had



**RENAMO guerrillas with Soviet-supplied hardware captured from FRELIMO military forces. Note AGS-17 grenade launcher in foreground.**

seen our headlights and waited for us to arrive but left when we failed to do so. Not to worry, though: they had an infallible system in place if we would come back that night. Very tired by now, but still determined, back we went for our nightly drive. Again, five hours down the road and through the bush, we were driving down the designated track when a log across it became visible in the vehicle's headlights. Thinking that could be the infallible system, we did a quick scan but could see no one emerging from the bush to greet us. Since logs across the road have traditionally been used for less than friendly purposes, the driver took the precaution of turning the Land-Rover around.

When the beam from the headlights swept across the track behind us it illuminated a rapidly growing mob of tribesmen outraged at our intrusion. Armed with bows



**Far from being a desperate group of "bandits," RENAMO operates numerous medical clinics for civilians in the areas it controls.**

and arrows, spears, machetes, and clubs, they were moving to block our retreat. These obviously excited people were not the ones we were hoping to meet and with considerable trepidation we drove slowly toward them. By the time we got close, we could count about 20 on or next to the road and about another 30 in the shadows a dozen yards away. There were no firearms in evidence (we had none either) so we slowed down as if we were going to stop, then accelerated once we were amongst them. The mob scattered, then gave chase as we bounced down the track. From all around us in the night came the sound of African women ululating — a terrific din, designed to spur their men into greater frenzies of action. It also served to spur our driver to a higher speed than was prudent on the rough ground, but luck was with the Christians and we pulled away from the sprinting warriors now howling in pursuit. The third attempt to get to the guerrillas had very nearly ended in disaster.

Five hours back to our staging area before we could get a few hours sleep and then try to find out what had gone wrong that time. It transpired that our RENAMO reception party, unarmed as always when traveling outside Mozambique, had, on their way to the rendezvous, met the same band of hostile natives. Since even stone-age weapons are better than none, the natives prevailed and drove off our guides a couple of hours before we appeared. Clearly an alternate plan was now necessary.

The new plan required the guerrillas to move some 40 miles away to another area where we could get within walking distance of the border. Even given their ability to cover ground at a rapid rate, the rebels couldn't make it by that night, so we could at least get a good long sleep before the next attempt. Ten hours a night bouncing around in a Land-Rover is not my favorite way to pass the time. I'd almost rather be filling out

*Continued on page 73*

# PARA KNIFE

## Sharp Answer to Airborne's Crucial Need

Text & Photos by Chuck Karwan

**T**HERE is an old saying that appears in many variations and languages, and in sources as far removed as Benjamin Franklin's *Poor Richard's Almanac* and the writings of George Herbert, the 17th century English poet. Typically, it goes:

*For want of a nail the shoe was lost;  
For want of a shoe the horse was lost;  
For want of a horse the rider was lost;  
For want of a rider the battle was lost;  
For want of a battle the kingdom was lost;  
And all for want of a horseshoe nail.*

And so it is today, even in our world of high-tech weaponry such as advanced jet fighters, nuclear subs and intercontinental ballistic missiles. For want of one of the simplest of tools — the knife — American military personnel are dying.

Last year alone at least two highly motivated members of our armed services died "for want of a knife." The first case that came to my attention happened in the 82nd Airborne Division on a parachute jump. On this particular drop there was an emergency situation known as a towed parachutist.

I will have to digress here a bit for non-parachutist SOF readers, and explain how a parachute jump is conducted in the U.S. Army. Each paratrooper has his parachute strapped to his back by a harness. The auto-

matic opening device for the parachute is called the static line and is a long nylon strap. Before exiting the aircraft the jumper connects his static line to the aircraft in response to the jump-preparation commands. Normally it is attached to a steel cable on the aircraft. When the jumper exits the aircraft he falls freely until he reaches the end of the static line which then releases the parachute, pulls it from its pack, and then breaks away from the chute. The chute opens and the trooper makes his descent to the ground.

On rare occasions the static line will fail to pull the parachute from its pack. This can come about when the static line is misrouted under a harness strap or other piece of gear or if it takes a turn around a piece of equipment like a rifle barrel. When this happens the jumper's parachute does not deploy and he is towed behind the aircraft at the end of the static line. This is one of the most dreaded parachute emergencies and competent jump masters and

**The Collins/Gerber/Karwan parachutist's knife features single-handed opening, compactness, light weight, hole for lanyard, and interchangeable blades — just what a parachutist needs to survive.**

jumpers make every effort to minimize the chance of its occurring.

As soon as the last man of the pass is out the door, the jump master's first job is to check for towed parachutists. If there is one, he must immediately ascertain if the jumper is conscious. Jumpers are told as part of their pre-jump briefing that if they find themselves being towed they are to signal that they are conscious by putting one or both hands on their heads. While this is going on, the Air Force load master or crew chief tells the pilot about the emergency on his intercom so that the pilot will keep the plane at a safe jump altitude and speed, as well as over a safe drop zone. If the jump master sees that the towed parachutist is conscious, he will cut the man's static line so that the jumper can fall free of the aircraft and deploy his reserve parachute. All of this must happen quickly because the towed parachutist is in extreme danger of being killed or knocked unconscious by slamming

**RIGHT: A thinner, hirsute Karwan ready to make a jump at Ft. Bragg. Note static line over his shoulder and M3 combat knife on his rucksack. Not visible but present was his personal Mk 2 parachute knife.**

### JUMPING KNIFE EXPERT

Already well known to SOF readers for his insightful articles on military hardware, Chuck Karwan is eminently qualified to discuss the topic of parachute and other military knives. He graduated from West Point, the Jungle Operations Training Course in Panama, Airborne School at Ft. Benning, Jump Master's School, the Special Forces Officer's Course and was an honor graduate of the tough Army Ranger School. He served in Vietnam in the 1st Cavalry Division (Airmobile) with half of his tour in the bush on combat operations. He subsequently served in both the 10th and 5th Special Forces Groups on airborne status where he made numerous military tactical parachute jumps both as a jumper and as a jump master. He also served in the airborne capacities of Marshalling Area Control Officer (MACO), Drop Zone Safety Officer (DSSO), and airborne tactical unit commander.





against the side of the aircraft or being smothered by the intense slipstream pressure squeezing him against his harness so tightly that he cannot breathe.

If you saw the second Rambo movie where he parachutes into Vietnam to gather information on POWs, he was a towed parachutist. In the movie he cuts his own static line, which is a virtual impossibility, but it does make for an exciting scene.

In case you are wondering what is done if the jumper is unconscious, there is actually little that can be done. A few aircraft may have a power winch aboard and an attempt will be made to winch him in. In fact if such equipment is present, the aircraft commander may try to use it on a conscious towed parachutist, but the consensus is that cutting the static line of a conscious towed parachutist offers him the best chance of survival. With an unconscious towed parachutist who cannot be winched on board, about the only alternative is to land on a foamed runway and hope for the best. Chances of survival are between slim and none.

Naturally, to perform the emergency procedure of cutting the static line the jump master must have the means to cut it. In every airborne unit I am aware of it is SOP that the jump master have a sharp knife at hand at all times. Tragically, in the recent incident in the 82nd Airborne, the jump master found himself with a conscious towed parachutist and *no knife* to cut the static line. To continue the tragedy, none of the aircraft crew had a knife either. Almost any reasonably sharp knife would have served but none was present. As a result the towed parachutist died for want of a knife.

The other incident that occurred last year also involved parachutes, only this time the subjects were aviators who had to eject from their aircraft. An Oregon Air National Guard F-4, with a pilot and navigator on a training mission, experienced an engine failure over the Pacific Ocean. A Mayday was radioed and both crew members ejected safely with both parachutes functioning perfectly. A Coast Guard rescue helicopter was immediately dispatched to the scene. Because of the extremely cold water, it was of the utmost importance to extract the people from the water as quickly as possible to prevent hypothermia (extreme loss of core body temperature). Hypothermia without timely intervention will invariably lead to death.

By the time the rescue helicopter arrived, both downed crew members were already suffering from hypothermia. Unfortunately they were also severely tangled up in the lines and canopies of their parachutes. Tragically, the rescue swimmer from the Coast Guard helicopter did not have a knife to aid in cutting away the parachute entanglement so that the Guardsmen could be extracted on the helicopter's winch. The swimmer worked frantically for about 25 minutes, manually untangling one of the aviators from his chute before he could be extracted. By this time, in spite of wearing a wet suit, the swimmer found herself suffering from hypothermia as well. She was unable to

**World War II-era Mark 2 parachutist's knives. In their day these switchblades were all there was, and are now collector's items.**



safely to the ground. An Army paratrooper will normally deploy his reserve chute and if it reaches down close enough to the ground, climb down it. If it is still too far from the ground he can selectively cut the shroud lines or a riser to further extend the reserve chute down to reach the ground. A pilot who has parachuted does not have the luxury of a reserve chute to climb down and consequently a knife is even more important to him.

The unplanned and unexpected water landing is probably the most common and most dangerous situation for the military parachutist where a good knife can be necessary for survival. The Army paratrooper may enter the water without a life preserver and encumbered with close to 100 pounds of equipment in the dead of night. Survival is going to mean getting out of his harness, and freeing himself from entanglements with his chute canopy in an extremely short time. It may only be possible to do so using a good parachute knife, even if all the quick release mechanisms do work properly. We have already seen how the pilot or crewman who ditches or parachutes into the ocean could find himself equally dependent on a knife to cut himself free of an entanglement so that he can get into a life raft or be extracted by a helicopter.

The other situation where a parachutist would find a parachute knife invaluable is after a crash landing. This is particularly likely in wartime when facing anti-aircraft fire or enemy interception. The parachute knife in this situation could be invaluable for freeing people from the wreckage by cutting seat belts, harnesses and the like.

While there probably is a place in hell for jump masters who forget or intentionally fail to carry a knife, there is more to the story. Even though airborne SOPs require jump masters to carry a knife, there is *no knife issued for that purpose* in the U.S. Army!

The jump master's military-issue options are far from satisfactory. They include attempting to requisition one of the military folding knives like the stainless steel utility knife along the lines of a boy scout knife, or the TL-29 lineman's knife issued to some communications personnel. If the jump master's regular position does not call for

continue the rescue of the other Guardsman, and had to be extracted herself.

The rescue helicopter returned to shore, delivering the one recovered crewman and the swimmer to medical personnel, then returned to the scene with a fresh swimmer and recovered the second crew member from the icy water. Regrettably, the time lost in recovering the second crewman was sufficient that he died from hypothermia. Since the first Guardsman pulled from the water survived, it is extremely likely that they both would have survived if the rescue swimmer or the downed pilots had possessed a suitable knife to cut free of the entangled parachutes. Having done so, both could have been extracted in the 25 minutes it took to recover just one. Yet another American serviceman died *for want of a knife*.

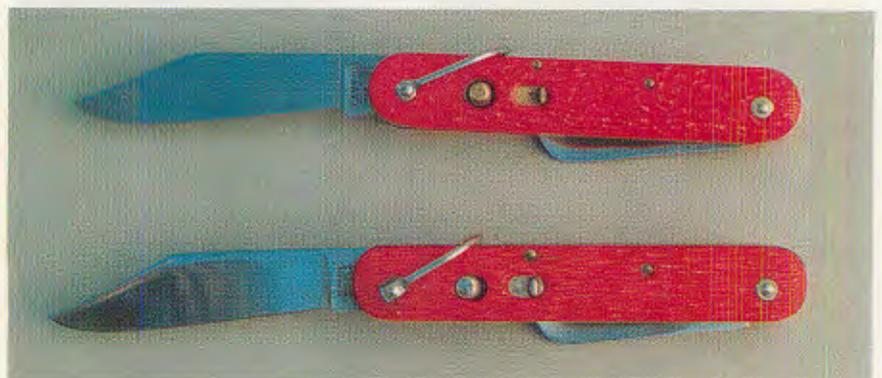
It is bad enough that our servicemen sometimes die from lack of a tool only one step technologically above a club, but think *back to the quote at the beginning of this piece*. It is entirely conceivable that the paratrooper who is lost *for want of a knife* might be a key unit commander without whose leadership many more lives, and the battle, could be lost. He could also be a soldier carrying a key piece of communications, antitank, anti-aircraft, or other equipment, and whose absence could be pivotal to the mission's success or failure. The resultant failure could mean the loss of many lives, the loss of the battle, and even the loss of the war, *for want of a knife*. What if the pilot who dies for the lack of a knife had important information that could prevent a surprise attack like Pearl Harbor? Or, even more likely, what if his skill and leadership would have made a significant difference in a later engagement? Like the missing horseshoe nail that causes the kingdom to be lost, the lack of a simple tool like a knife can have consequences well beyond the tragic

**Current-issue West German gravity-type parachutist's knives, very similar to WWII-issue German knives. Author finds they will do the job, but are bulky in relation to size of their blade.**

and unnecessary death of one individual.

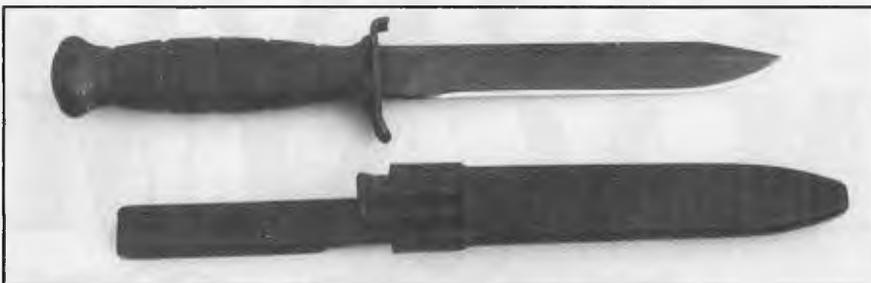
While the need for a jump master to have a knife is undisputed, most experienced military parachutists would also agree that every parachutist should carry a readily accessible emergency parachute knife. The reason is so that the paratrooper can deal with any one of many parachute-related emergencies when he reaches the end of his ride down. These can include water landings, landings in deep snowdrifts, landings in swamp or deep mud and so forth. Most of the time the jumper can deal with such emergencies by using the quick-release buckles and straps found on the current military parachutes. However, a properly designed parachute knife can make the difference in surviving the incident or not. For example, if the parachutist lands in a high tree he has to figure out some way to get

**Two examples of the Air Force MC-1 parachute/survival knife as made by Schrade and Camillus.**



the issue of such a knife, and even sometimes if it does, these knives can be difficult or impossible to obtain on issue. Another option is to take the issue mess-kit knife and sharpen it and carry it in a homemade sheath — a bit extreme, but it's been done. Probably the best issue option, though it is far from ideal, is to use the issue bayonet if it's sharp enough. Depending on the jump master's rank, position and issue firearm he may not even have an assigned bayonet. While any of the above-mentioned issue-knife options could serve to cut a static line, none can serve satisfactorily for all the other requirements of a parachute knife.

In the airborne units I served with (5th and 10th Special Forces) jump masters and other parachutists desiring to carry parachute knives *bought their own*. I don't have to tell you what I think about soldiers having to buy their own emergency equipment! Sadly, this is still the case today with regard to parachute knives, although it has not always been so. From the time of the formation of the first U.S. airborne units prior to World War II, until well after Korea, every airborne soldier was issued a Mk 2 Parachutist's Knife. These are push button (switchblade) knives with a 3½-inch clip point blade and black plastic handle scales. They have a lanyard staple and were issued with a thong or lanyard made from a piece of parachute shroud line. Most were made by the Schrade Cutlery Company of Walden, New York, or George Schrade of Bridgeport, Connecticut. The latter are also typi-



Author illustrates several make-do possibilities for a parachutist's knife. The West German Kampfmesser (top) has a properly shaped blade and secure scabbard, as does the Austrian issue Glock (above). The M9 bayonet, shown with the Gerber bolt-action folder (below) is bulky and has no provision for a lanyard. The size of the M9 is apparent in this shot of available GI knives (bottom) which include the M9, the TL-29 commo knife, the utility pocket (demo) knife, sharpened mess kit knife, and M7 bayonet.

cally marked "Presto."

The reason a switchblade knife was chosen was to allow one-handed opening with either hand since the other hand could be injured or otherwise engaged. A folding knife was chosen for compactness and safety. Far from ideal, the Mk 2 Parachutist's Knife was still far better than nothing. The reason the Mk 2 was withdrawn from service was the stigma surrounding switchblades, the difficulty in accounting for them and keeping them from being "lost," and the feeling that the improved parachute harnesses with their quick-release buckles made the parachute knife unnecessary. To be quite honest the parachute knife *is* only rarely needed, but when it *is* needed nothing else works nearly so well. Experienced and knowledgeable U.S. military parachutists almost invariably carry a parachute knife or another knife that could double as one.

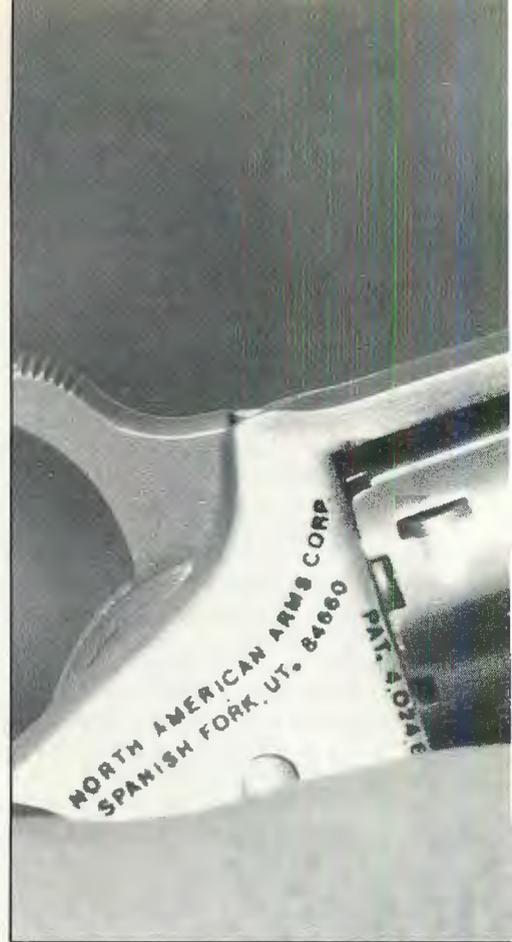
An illustration of the validity of this latter approach is the parachute knife the West German airborne still issues to every German paratrooper (*Fallschirmjaeger*). Except for its plastic handle and stainless steel construction, it is quite similar to the World War II German issue parachute knife. It is a gravity knife, which means the blade slides in and out under the force of gravity when a thumb release is pushed. The blade locks in either position. As on the Mk 2 this design allows for one-handed opening. It is a high-quality knife of excellent materials, design, and workmanship. My major criticism of the West German parachute knife is its excessive weight and bulk for the 3½-inch blade it carries. New examples of this knife made by Eickhorn are available for \$42.50 postpaid from Hansen & Company, Dept. SOF, 244-246 Old Post Road, Southport, CT 06490.

In 1958 the U.S. Air Force adopted a parachute knife called the MC-1 Survival Knife. It is little more than a variation of the



# MINI PISTOL, MAGNUM FORCE

North American Arms'  
**6 Ounces of Prevention** Text & Photos by Peter G. Kokalis



**T**HOUSANDS of cops carry small "back-up" guns. Few of them know how effective or ineffective they might be, unless the awful, but admittedly remote, occasion arises when they are forced to employ them against a human target.

Sometimes referred to as "hideaway" or "second" guns, the salient features of these weapons are supposed to be compactness and light weight. They should be all but unnoticeable, both to those carrying them and to their potential targets. As it's impossible to stuff a .45 ACP cartridge into a controllable envelope with these parameters, back-up guns are commonly dismissed on grounds of inadequate wound ballistics. Pistols chambered for the .45 ACP and 9mm Parabellum cartridges are all too large to qualify as true hideaways. Most .380 ACP and .32 ACP caliber handguns are borderline in this regard. Revolvers chambered for the .38 Special cartridge and equipped with two- or three-inch barrels are no better.

That leaves us with either the .22 LR, .22 Magnum Rimfire or .25 ACP rounds. The

.25 ACP (6.35mm) semi-rimless cartridge will feed reliably in most semiauto pistols, but even the .22 Short will usually inflict a more serious wound. The .22 Magnum Rimfire was introduced by Winchester in 1959. It's essentially an elongated and more powerful version of the older .22 Winchester Rimfire (WRF) cartridge. The most potent rimfire cartridge currently available, its 40-grain bullet will move out of some rifle barrels at close to 2,000 fps.

The smallest firearm I have ever encountered chambered for the .22 Magnum Rimfire cartridge is the single-action North American Arms Mini-Revolver. Their Lilliputian Model #NAA-22MS has a barrel length of only 1½ inches. With a height of just 2¾ inches and a thickness of ¾-inch (outside diameter of the cylinder), the overall length is but five inches. The weight, empty, is an amazing 5.9 ounces. Even when loaded with five shots, you won't



Although it resembles a 19th-century S&W, the NAA Mini-Revolver has been fabricated from modern 17-4 stainless steel with more than adequate strength to handle the powerful .22 Magnum Rimfire cartridge. An optional .22 LR cylinder is available for practice sessions.



When stuffed with five rounds of 40-grain FMJ .22 Magnum Rimfire ammunition, the North American Arms Mini-Revolver packs a surprisingly potent punch for such a minuscule package.

ing, is fabricated from 17-4 stainless steel, as are all other components except the springs, hand, bolt and index pin. The finish is matte with brushed sides. The laminated hardwood grip panels are color-impregnated with a liquid thermosetting plastic resin.

Interchangeable .22 LR and .22 Magnum Rimfire cylinders (marked "LR" and "M," respectively) are available. Each cylinder holds five rounds. Cylinder rotation is clockwise (from the rear). Barrel-to-cylinder gap on SOF's test specimen was .008" for the .22 Magnum Rimfire cylinder and .012" for the .22 LR cylinder. Industry standards are .003" to .008". Although the .22 LR cylinder's gap was too large, both cylinders were correctly aligned axially, as the gap did not change from chamber to chamber. For added safety, the chambers are recessed. In addition, the cylinder has been designed so that the hammer cannot strike the cartridge unless the cylinder is perfectly aligned.

You can forget about "speed loading" techniques, as the NAA Mini-Revolver's cylinder does not swing outward. To load, you must first place the hammer in the half-cock position. Grasp the knurled portion of the cylinder pin between the thumb and the middle finger. Depress the release button with the forefinger to the bottomed position and withdraw the pin completely. The cylinder can now be removed from either side of the revolver. Insert five cartridges into the chambers. Reinsert and align the loaded cylinder. Re-install the cylinder pin

even know it's there, if it's properly tucked away. Be assured, it's not a toy. Untold numbers of these minuscule wheel-guns are dropped into boots or hip pockets of police officers from California to New York every day in the week before they step out onto the hot pavement.

In outward appearance all of the North American Arms Mini-Revolvers are more than vaguely reminiscent of the 19th-

century Smith & Wesson Model I, Third Issue rimfire revolvers, although they are not tip-ups. NAA Mini-Revolvers feature a classic spur trigger (the trigger projects only slightly from an extension, or "spur," on the frame and there is no trigger guard) and "bird's-head" grips that come to a point in front.

Little else from the 19th century remains. The frame, a mill-finished investment cast-

*Continued on page 78*

### NAA-22MS MINI-REVOLVER SPECIFICATIONS

- Caliber:** . . . . .22 Magnum Rimfire, with optional .22 LR cylinder (.22 LR-only and .22 Short models also available).
- Operation:** . . . . .Five-shot revolver. Single-action only. Safety notch between each chamber permits carry with all five shots loaded.
- Weight, empty:** . . . . .5.9 ounces.
- Length, overall:** . . . . .5 inches.
- Height, overall:** . . . . .2 $\frac{3}{8}$  inches.
- Width, overall:** . . . . . $\frac{7}{8}$  inch.
- Barrel length:** . . . . .1 $\frac{1}{2}$  inches (1 $\frac{1}{8}$ - and 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch barrel also available).
- Grip panels:** . . . . .Laminated hardwood color-impregnated with liquid thermosetting plastic resin.
- Sights:** . . . . .Rounded, fixed front sight blade. Hammer/firing pin notch serves as rear sight.
- Finish:** . . . . .Stainless steel; matte with brushed sides.
- Price:** . . . . . \$158 (\$190 with optional .22 LR cylinder).
- Manufacturer:** . . . . .North American Arms, Dept. SOF, 1800 North 300 West, Spanish Fork, UT 84660; phone: 1-800-821-5783.
- T&E summary:** . . . . .Cost-effective, well-made and reliable. Best possible compromise between the envelope required for deep concealment and effective wound ballistics when employed with the 40-grain FMJ .22 Magnum Rimfire cartridge.

Bruce Nelson's precision hand molded holster for the NAA Mini-Revolver has been attached to its backplate without cant, so it can be carried strong side or crossdraw. Velcro strips can be sewn into a briefcase, purse or the pocket of a sport coat or safari jacket to secure the rig.



# MOST DANGEROUS GAME

## Gunner Cuts Friend a New Asshole

by Len Newman

Illustration by Ralph Butler

**E**VERYTHING in Vietnam was dangerous. The people, the terrain, the weather, and the mission — they all worked against you every day in the 'Nam. Constant alertness was SOP and when it waned, people got hurt. In hindsight, I think we felt frustrated and helpless in the face of such constant and varied danger, and when the physical strain or the fear of death wasn't stridently screaming at us to stay alive, it was easy to lapse into being what we really were — 18- and 19-year-old adolescents with deadly weapons, in deadly situations. The war and its stress didn't completely dampen our youth and, conditions permitting, we were just as prone to horseplay and goofing off as we would have been back on the "block" on a Sunday afternoon.

One particular incident involving horseplay, temporary lack of caution, and a bit of "American Cocktail-Type Whiskey" nearly cost one man his life and his best friend his sanity. It happened during a cordon operation on a complex of hamlets along a river. A cordon operation consisted of the early morning surrounding of a village, designed to entrap any Viet Cong infiltrators in the ville before they had a chance to escape into the jungle. At first light a team of interpreters and Army intelligence personnel would roust the village chief and require him to identify every member of the village, by sight, as they were paraded in front of him. Then each person's government ID would be checked against the picture and what the chief had to say. As the villagers were herded outside the cordon

### INNOCENT BYSTANDER

Len Newman was a rifleman in I Corps during 1968-69, serving with B Co., 1/61 of the 5th Infantry Division (Mech), when he witnessed the unfortunate incident in this account. It is excerpted from a forthcoming book on his experiences in Vietnam.

ring, we would separate them, females to one side, males to the other. After the village was emptied, we would move into it and search every hut for weapons or evidence of recent Viet Cong or NVA presence. If nothing was found the villagers were allowed to return to their homes. If it was evident that the village was a haven for the enemy, it would be burned to the ground and the people sent to resettlement camps.

This particular village was located on the bank of a large river and because of its proximity to Quang Tri City was considered fairly secure. After clearing the ville and allowing the people to return, we were informed that we would be staying in the area to pull ambushes and village patrols. The news lifted everyone's spirits as we knew it would be all too soon before we headed west into the mountain jungles to meet "Luke the Gook" en masse and on his home turf. Village patrolling was likened to in-country R&R and we all relished the next few days of lounging around in the sun and pulling bullshit little ambushes on two and three unsuspecting local Viet Cong at night. Tru-

ly gravy duty.

That afternoon we dug in on the trail that passed between the village and the river. Whenever the machine gun was set in a perimeter a rifleman would be assigned to the position to provide security for the gun crew. This coming night, that debatable honor was to be mine, which meant I would have to help dig a three-man hole for the machine-gun position.

The Army classifies the M60 machine gun as a crew-served weapon, manned by a gunner and an assistant, or A-gunner. Because the '60 isn't deemed a personal weapon, each man is issued a .45 caliber autoloading pistol as a personal sidearm. The .45 isn't the most accurate piece in the world but it is reliable and it was widely believed that all you had to do was hit a man in the thumbnail and it would probably break his back.

The M1911 was designed with knock-down power in mind, based on the poor performance of .38 revolvers during the Philippine insurrection of the early 1900s. The design was so sound that the M1911A1s we were issued in Vietnam differed only in minor detail from the M1911s which went to the Philippines nearly three-quarters of a century before.

Kelso and Booker were the machine-gun crew to which I was assigned that day. Kelso was a white kid from somewhere in Virginia and Booker, the A-gunner, was a black kid from Mississippi. In the States they might not have hung around together, but here in the 'Nam they had become fast



friends as well as a crew. Gun crews usually became good friends but these two were like brothers. Even though he was the assistant gunner, Booker was the more serious of the two while Kelso was the wild devil-may-care type. They were a good gun and could be counted on when the shit got thick.

With the village secured and everything back to as normal as it could get, everybody started to let down a little. Even the villagers, sensing that we were not going to cause any pain that day, began to joke and barter with us. It wasn't long before the first enterprising young Vietnamese appeared with a net bag filled with cokes and beer for a buck apiece. We all knew the routine. Someone asked the boy, who at the very outside was nine years old, "Can you get some real booze?"

"Sure GI, no sweat! What you want? American whiskey, numba one dinkey dau smoke, anything you want I get. I numba one man this whole village."

Our medic shunned any dealings with the local black market and tried in vain to run the kids off, but the one persistent young boy kept at him.

"OK kid, if you can get a bottle of Beefeater gin, I'll buy it."

"What this Beefeater?" asked the boy and we all tried to describe the bottle to him. The kid took off with everyone making bets as to whether he would come back or not. Unbelievably, he returned 20 minutes later with a green bottle of Beefeater gin. We all made the medic cough up the \$20 for the bottle while the young boy beamed at the attention and look of

respect in the medic's eyes.

The booze was all the same whether the bottle said Vodka or Seagrams Seven. The label would look authentic but there was a small line of print at the bottom of the bottle that said "Genuine American Cocktail-Type Whiskey: made in Hong Kong." It tasted like rotgut but it was booze and what the hell, it suited the times. The preferred brand was Silver Fox 45 because although you knew it was rotgut, the name had an air of aristocracy about it.

Kelso and Booker bought a bottle of generic booze and some warm cokes and started swigging it down. I started digging on the hole as they tried to coax some of the local girls into coming nearer. They were simple farm girls and other than giggling and pointing, would come no closer.

With the heat and hot booze it wasn't long before Kelso and Booker were pretty well lit. I knew they would probably be all right by the time guard came around but I declined to indulge — just in case. The digging was easy because of the soft sand and it wasn't long before I had the hole about waist deep. I looked up to see that Booker had donned both his and Kelso's .45s and pistol belts. He walked up to Kelso like a gunslinger, drew a pistol and cocked the hammer back. He placed the muzzle between Kelso's eyes and pulled the trigger. "Click."

"Gotcha!" Booker laughed.

"Oh yeah, I'll show you 'gotcha!' " laughed Kelso as he bent over to pick up the machine gun, propped on its bipod along-

side the hole. I shook my head and went back to digging. While Kelso was bent over, Booker pulled out the other .45, dropped the magazine and placed the muzzle in Kelso's butt.

BOOM!

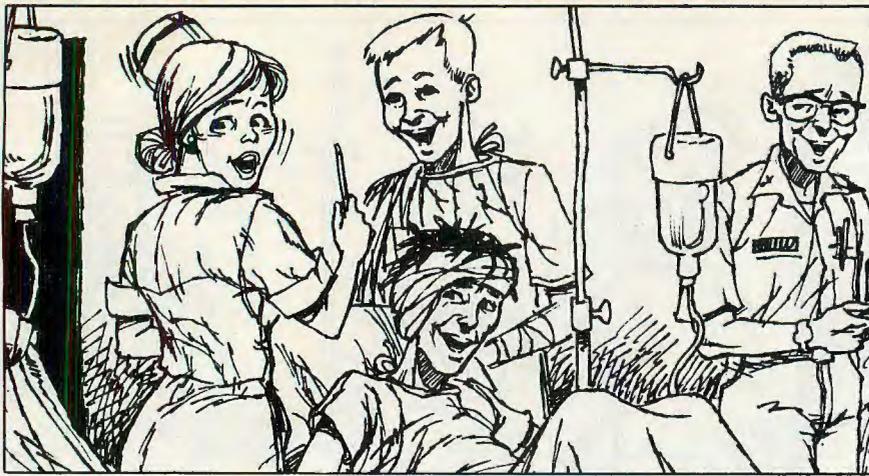
I dropped to the bottom of the hole thinking, "I've got to be hit, no one could miss from that close!"

After realizing I wasn't hit I looked up to see Kelso and Booker frozen in the most ridiculous pose I've ever seen. Kelso was still bent over the gun with Booker still holding the smoking .45 in his ass. The only thing that didn't fit was the look on their faces. Their eyes were big and round with an "oh shit" expression in them. Very, very slowly Kelso stood and reached back to grab his butt with both hands.

"Oh, oh, oh" was all that Kelso could say as he started to dance around, holding his butt with both hands. I jumped out of the hole and laid him down face first, and pulled down his pants. Blood began to boil out of his butt like a spring. Grabbing a field dressing I stuffed it in the crack of his ass.

"Goddamn it, Booker, get down here and help me," I yelled at the A-gunner who was staring down at us with a look of total disbelief on his face.

I grabbed Booker by the wrist and pulled his hand to the dressing. "Hold pressure, hard, until I get back." I took off on a dead run toward the platoon CP where I knew Doc would be, yelling "MEDIC" at the top of my lungs. All along the line people were in their holes, loaded and cocked, thinking



we were getting sniper fire. Doc started running toward me and as we headed back to the gun position asked, "What is it?"

"Booker shot Kelso in the ass with a .45," I stammered, thinking how ridiculous it must sound.

Doc just looked at me and asked, "What does the exit wound look like?"

"Shit!" I hadn't even thought to look for an exit wound and told him so as we approached Booker and Kelso, who remained in the same position as when I left. Doc pushed Booker out of the way and lifted the dressing to reveal a neat hole about ¼ of an inch away and at about 2 o'clock from Kelso's anus.

"While I roll him over to check out the exit wound, you hold pressure on this dressing," the medic instructed me. As we slowly rolled Kelso over Doc pulled down the bloody front of his pants. About half way up his penis on the left side was the exit wound with tissue hanging out of the .45 hole. Kelso was already in shock with his eyes glazed over, which was just as well at that point.

By now the CO had been informed and a medevac was on the way. The company medic arrived and took over from me, helping our medic. Booker still couldn't talk as the platoon leader took me aside and asked, "What in the hell happened?"

I tried to explain to the lieutenant that it was an accident, but he wasn't hearing any of it. He started to threaten Booker with everything from Leavenworth to permanent point. The CO was the one who really handled the situation with coolness. When the chopper medic read "self-inflicted" on the tag attached to Kelso's fatigue shirt, he asked with an incredulous look, "How does a guy shoot himself in the ass with a .45?" It was the only humorous spot in the day.

Booker sat crying, thinking he had killed his best friend Kelso. The booze and what he had done was driving him nuts. There was nothing anyone could say to make him feel any better. We all knew Booker would have never played around with guns under normal conditions, and Kelso was partially at fault for keeping a round in the chamber. Booker had thought the weapon was clear when he dropped the magazine.

"I can't go home knowing I killed Kelso, I just can't!" sobbed Booker. "I just want to die."

Someone jerked the pistol out of Booker's hand as he started to turn the weapon on himself. That night we took turns sitting with Booker, getting him so drunk that he finally passed out. The next morning word came down from battalion that Kelso was going to make it and was on his way to Tokyo.

We all knew we would never see Kelso again but at least he was out of the shit and in a way his making it reinforced our belief that all we had to do was make it to the chopper and we would be OK, no matter how bad our wound might be.

Operating in the same general area about four months later, I noticed a convoy of tanks moving through the nearby village. They halted and I made out a grunt with all his gear climbing off the lead tank. As the convoy moved on the figure started toward us through the rice paddies.

"Hey guys, how's it going?"

Everyone was too dumbfounded to speak as Kelso, looking none the worse for wear, staggered up.

With a grin on his mug from ear to ear he asked, "You guys didn't think you could get rid of me *that* easy, did you? Hey, where's Booker?" Kelso scanned the amazed faces for his friend and A-gunner.

"He got transferred out," someone answered.

Booker had not been able to deal with the accident and was sent to the rear shortly after, never to be heard from again.

"Damn, I wanted to show him my scar. I hope he didn't catch too much flak for getting me a four-month stay in Japan. I wanted to thank him!"

Kelso then proceeded to tell us the most amazing story of his stay in the hospital and treatment of the wound. He had been sent directly to Tokyo because his wound was beyond the medical scope of the Third Evac at Dong Ha. In Japan, after being stabilized, the surgeon had asked Kelso if he wanted to watch the operation, as it was going to be unique. They gave him an anesthetic that deadened him below the waist and positioned a mirror so that he could watch the

entire procedure wide awake. The first incision had been from the bullet hole in his rectum to the one on the side of the penis. Kelso said he looked on in awe as his body was split open and the lower intestine fell out into a solution of antibiotics. There were 14 holes in the intestine where the bullet had passed through it as it lay curled at the bottom of his pelvis. The surgeon commented on how lucky he had been that the bullet hadn't struck any bone as it passed through his body, saying that Kelso had been bent over at just the right angle. If the bullet from a .45 fired at that range had struck the pelvis, he probably would have spent the rest of his life in a wheel chair.

The first thing they did was to sew up all 14 holes and return the intestine to its original position. Then the internal damage to the penis was repaired. The initial incision was closed and the hole in the rectum and penis stitched. Kelso said he was amazed at the proficiency of the medical staff as the operation came off without a hitch. It wasn't until he started to heal that the real problem arose, so to speak. The .45 hole in the penis had been stitched while Kelso lay there with, literally, a limp dick. A few days after the wound began to heal, Kelso experienced his first uncontrollable erection. He woke up thinking someone was trying to tear his pecker off. The screaming brought a nurse who exclaimed, "God, will you look at that!"

The doctors repaired the tear but every time Kelso would have an erection the stitches would be torn out again. The risk of infection and permanently damaged tissue worried the doctors but there was no existing protocol on the treatment of .45 holes to the penis. Kelso said as the wound would begin to heal his penis would bend to the left and he would try hard not to think of anything that might make him horny, which is hard as hell for an 18 year old who has been in the field for several months.

Finally a surgeon, combining a little Yankee ingenuity with the insight of a mohel, decided that the only way to allow the wound to heal symmetrically was to cut a band of skin around the entire circumference of Kelso's penis, the width of the original .45 hole. The procedure worked, and as a result Kelso now possesses the only built-in French tickler I know of.

Kelso beamed with pride as he showed us the neat piece of work on his now-famous appendage.

The story didn't end there, as Kelso went on to recount his downtown exploits with Tokyo bar girls. The girls were aficionadettes of that particular part of the male anatomy and squealed with glee, or so Kelso told it, whenever it was brought out for display.

I don't know if the words "self-inflicted" had anything to do with Kelso being sent back to the field, but he was the only one I ever heard of who made it back to his unit after being in Japan. But then again, the whole story is hard to believe unless you were there. ❧

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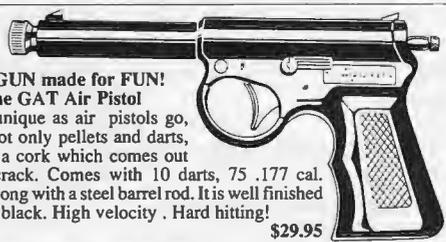
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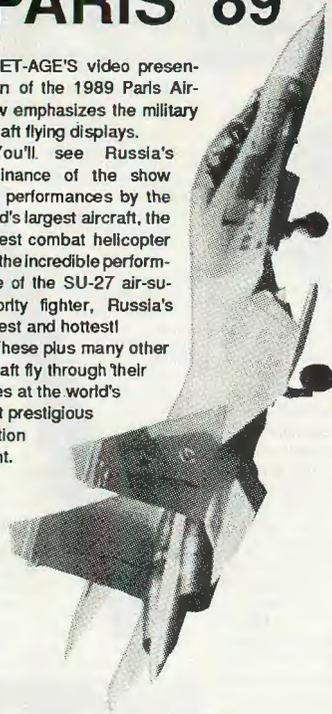
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## PARA KNIFE

*Continued from page 65*

Army Mk 2, being a switchblade of about the same size with the same length and shape blade. The differences are that the scales are bright orange, the lanyard staple is on the master blade end, and there is a manually opened hook blade which allows the selective cutting of shroud lines, straps, and such without puncturing a life vest, a life raft, or the person using it. The MC-1 has been made by both Camillus and Schrade. This knife is still issued to a limited extent to some pilots and aircraft crew members. It is not known if the two F-4 crew members mentioned earlier had MC-1 knives. Many of the newer aircraft eject crew members out in a kind of capsule that precludes the use of a parachute knife.

After learning of the two incidents related earlier I became concerned. The more I thought about U.S. paratroopers and aircraft crew members dying for want of a knife the worse I felt. I am especially livid over the fact that if a paratrooper wants to carry a parachute knife he has to buy his own. It is particularly unconscionable that jump masters are required to carry such a knife but no satisfactory issue option is available to them, and they have to buy their own to properly fulfill their mission. To make matters worse, although a number of commercial knives can serve reasonably well in the parachute knife role, none are specifically designed for the job.

As a result of all this I drew upon my experience as a military parachutist and jump master to draw up specifications for an "ideal" parachutist's knife. I conferred with experienced airborne friends and did considerable research on the subject of parachute knives and their uses. These are the general specifications that I came up with for a parachute knife:

1. Lightweight
2. Compact
3. Capable of easily cutting a nylon static line or a heavy web strap
4. Have a round, unsharpened point
5. Have a lanyard with one end attached to the jumper
6. Be readily accessible to either hand with full equipment in place
7. If it is a folder it must be opened with either hand, one handed, and be closed the same way

Most of these specifications are self explanatory or obvious. However discussion of 4 and 5 may be in order. The unsharpened round point is necessary to permit slipping the blade between the jumper and a tight strap without puncturing or cutting the individual or a life vest he may be wearing. The lanyard is necessary for several reasons. If the jump master has to cut a static line near the open door, the possibility of the knife being knocked out of his hand by the high wind is good. The lanyard will keep it from being lost, and should it be dropped out the door it will keep the knife from hitting the towed jumper. This is a major reason why

the lanyardless bayonet is *not* satisfactory for a jump master's use. Also, a lanyard will prevent loss of the knife in a tree or water landing if it is dropped.

Considering the weight-and-bulk burden the average paratrooper has to put up with, I felt that a light but strong folder would be the best way to go. Looking over what was already on the market it appeared to me that the Gerber Bolt-Action folder, originally designed by Blackie Collins, would be an almost ideal basis for what I had in mind. I took the previously related stories about servicemen dying for the lack of a parachute knife to Doug Hutchins, the product manager at Gerber. He was enthusiastic about doing something to correct this situation. Starting with the Bolt-Action Exchange Blade model with the utility blade, I suggested that a slot be cut in the back of the blade to give the thumb of either hand a purchase for one-handed opening. Blackie's excellent design already allows for easy one-handed closing. I also suggested that the point be rounded and unsharpened and the blade edge be serrated for easy cutting of nylon and webbing. Doug had a couple prototype blades made up and preliminary testing indicated that we were on the right track.

The reason I suggested the exchange blade model be used is because of its versatility. My concept was that once the parachutist or aircraft crew member was safely on the ground he could exchange the special-purpose parachute blade for a more useful conventional utility or skinning blade for general purpose use. Gerber even makes a folding saw blade for this knife that would be handy in a survival situation.

One of the prototype Gerber parachute knives was sent to the 1st Special Forces Group for an informal test and evaluation in conjunction with the jump master course that was being taught. Much to our delighted surprise the knife was enthusiastically endorsed without a single suggestion for improvement, though there were several suggestions for a better carrying pouch and other carrying methods.

As we go to press, the Gerber Jump Master's Parachute Knife has not yet been approved for production by the Gerber hierarchy but it is looking good for approval in the near future. When it is, jump masters, other paratroopers and aircraft crew members will still have to buy their own parachute knife, but at least there will be a mission-designed knife that they *can* buy.

Until this knife is available there are other lightweight folders that can be opened and closed with one hand that can fill the parachute knife role reasonably well. These are the Gerber Bolt-Action Utility, the Spyderco folders (particularly the Hunter Model with serrated edge), the Blackjack Knives' lightweight folding Mamba, and the A.G. Russell Paramedic One-Hand Knife. Among benchmark knives the Bob Terzuola titanium-handled liner lock folders designed for one-hand opening are tough to beat.

It is a travesty that jump masters and

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parachutists have to buy their own knives. However, even if that is what it takes, it is certainly better to buy an appropriate knife than to have another good man die *for want of a knife.* ✕

## SOF RESCUE

*Continued from page 61*

my tax return.

Attempt number four started on time, and as if to make up for the previous ones, everything went according to plan. We got to the right place at the right time, and so did RENAMO's representatives. Leaving our driver with appropriate instructions regarding our pickup, we set off on foot, arriving several hours later at a hastily constructed insurgent camp. On arrival we were offered coffee and told that the president of RENAMO, Afonse Dhlakama, was also in the camp and would see us in the morning. A pole-and-thatch hut had already been built for conferences, and two tents erected for us to sleep in. The tents included mattresses with sheets and blankets, and since it was now 0300 we wasted little time before putting them to proper use.

Having had considerable experience dealing with President Dhlakama in the past, I was not surprised a few hours later at the smoothness of the negotiations for della Casa's release. The discussion that we had could hardly even be classified as a "negotiation," since nothing was demanded in return for the captive's freedom. I was surprised when Dhlakama said that Nicholas was in camp a few hundred yards away and that I could take him whenever I wanted. It seems that President Daniel Arap Moi of Kenya had also asked for Nick's release and that when Dhlakama had agreed to meet me to discuss the issue he had also arranged for his unwilling guest to start moving the hundreds of miles to our meeting place. After a couple more hours discussion on the military and political situation in Mozambique, I met della Casa. Advising him that his mother wanted him home, we chatted for a while until evening, and then started out of Free Mozambique.

All that remained now was to get Mr. della Casa home to his family. We delivered Nicholas della Casa to his mother at London's Heathrow Airport on 19 December and then returned to the United States. Even though he had been in captivity for 18 months, he was very favorably inclined toward the guerrillas and their cause. As has every other foreigner who has spent time in Free Mozambique, he reports that the insurgents enjoy widespread popular support, and that no one is starving in guerrilla-held areas.

For myself, I won't say that it was all just another day-in-the-life — I don't make my living running off to foreign lands like the proverbial knight rescuing unwary souls from misfortune. But after a couple of decades of first-hand experience I do know

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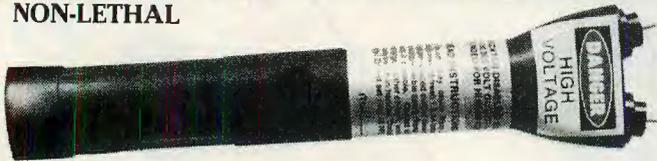
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## BLOODY PANJSHIR

Continued from page 43

only reason I could figure for this was that he wanted to top me and didn't want the pants covered in blood, as they were good American camouflaged ones.

There seemed no escape at all. No chance to run, no place to run to, and a gunman who was in no mood for conversation. To get my pants off, and I wanted to do this as fast as possible as I was worried that his companions would arrive any second, I had to unlace my boots and take them off. This was the crucial period. In my 10 years experience of covering wars I have discovered that if a prisoner has his boots taken away he is in for a very bad time and is probably only minutes, or seconds, from death. If he kept the boots, I was convinced I was not going to survive this encounter. Not that I held out much hope anyway, but there is always just a slim chance of life as long as there is hope. Pants off, I laced up my boots before handing them over.

There I stood, decidedly on the losing side of the scenario, assuring him that he was very welcome to my pants as I had spare ones in Paghman and I could be there in three to four hours hike over the mountains. He looked baffled and embarrassed by my naked legs. Afghans who possess U.S.-issue camouflage clothing (available through U.S. Senator Solarz' non-lethal aid projects) wear them over their own traditional baggy pants. To be confronted by naked legs in a country of very modest Islamic ideals of decency seemed to throw him.

He asked me to put my other trousers on, assuming that my small backpack contained a spare set. I explained that I had no spare set with me but assured him that this was no problem.

He stepped back, looked about, and then said I could have his!

Then, and I swear this is the gospel truth, he rushed to a boulder 20 meters away and, keeping me covered with his AK-47, stood

behind the rock and changed into my pants. This done he rushed back with his and offered them to me.

Desperate as I was to hurry off, I accepted this offer (thereby trying to break down the robber-victim barrier) and leapt into them, possible only because Afghan pants have very wide leg openings and boots pass through with no effort. He then demanded my watch once again. I asked if he would shoot me, or let me go, if I gave it to him. He said I could go. Zap the watch was off and given with the very best wishes for his long and happy life.

In return he unexpectedly removed the roll of toilet paper from the pockets of my former pants, gave it to me, and ordered me to hurry off. With a very tangible twitch between my shoulder blades, I strode (large strides) away toward the ridgetop, departing without a backward glance at the gunman or my plundered possessions. My only concern was to put as much space between us as possible before his companions closed up.

No shots followed and, as soon as I cleared the ridge, I ran like an Olympic sprinter, convinced that I had only survived the encounter because of the watch. Had the bandit shot me, he would have had to squabble over ownership of the watch with his fellow robbers. As he was young, I presume he was the youngest of the band and least likely to end up with it. By letting me go, he would be able to say I had no personal possessions worth having, other than my pants, which he would wear with pride as a symbol of his martial prowess and victory.

The watch had been a gift from my brothers. Little did they, or I, realize that one day it would buy me my life.

It was only just after 1100. Further ahead I caught up with the escort who had run off. Together we walked on to the next karagi. Here a three-man escort was arranged, with suggestions that I delay a day before moving on. Already far behind schedule, and only a three hour walk from Paghman, I was keen to push on. I dismissed another suggestion to wait until dark.

We set off across fields and through a small thicket into a gully. Before leaving the gully the eldest escort, the other two being distressingly young, advised that we split up and move out one at a time while crossing the front of an exposed ridge. I gathered from this that the path wasn't quite as secure as had been claimed.

I brought up the rear, allowing plenty of time for a good-sized gap. By the time I emerged from the gully, the others were well ahead. I picked up my pace to try and close the gap slightly. I must have been halfway round, still some 200 meters from cover in the next gully, when a heavy caliber round thudded into the ground. Nobody seemed to react to this all-too-frequent experience. Just a chance round coming in. Then a loud rush of air screamed past, followed by an explosion 20 yards ahead. Flame and black smoke leapt up 10 yards off the track.

Everybody began to run for all they were

worth. The track was completely exposed and safety depended on reaching the gully ahead. Before the explosion died away, hundreds of rounds began to spatter all around, kicking up dirt and sparks. They were all nearly spent but lethal nonetheless. It was obvious now that we were under fire from several Afghan army posts.

Another rush of air and I instinctively flinched tight before the inevitable explosion. Much too small to be tank or artillery fire. Not even large enough for mortar fire, unless a 60mm one, but it didn't sound like incoming mortars. It didn't sound like RPGs either. I was at a total loss to account for all these rapid explosions as I sprinted pell-mell down the path, bent double in a low crouch. Then I realized what the explosions were; AGS-17 grenades were raining down on us.

More explosions went off in front, beside and behind me. All the time hundreds of rounds were clipping past, some falling short and spraying dirt up over the track, others ricocheting off rocks with loud metallic twangs. The gully never seemed to get any closer. Dust and acrid smoke hung over the path. Another explosion, frighteningly close by, cast a fleeting yellowish glow across the ground from its deep red core.

With every ounce of remaining strength, I lunged forward and made for the scattered cover of the gully, diving behind a rock next to my mujahid escort. The cover was only illusory; just a thin screen of trees and bushes through which dozens of rounds thwacked as they clipped branches and chewed up bark. We squeezed up in tight balls behind the rock waiting for 82mm mortars to stonk us.

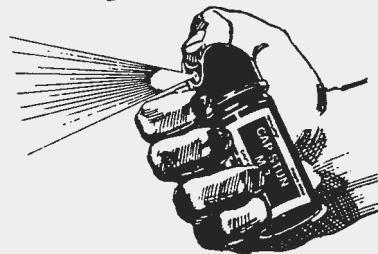
The volume of fire died away now that we were out of sight. Only then did I become aware of a burning sensation just above my left hip. As I rolled up my shirt, a thin trickle of blood slid down from a slight cut. I'd been hit. The miniscule wound bore no relation to the size of shock it gave me to realize I'd been hit by either fragmentation from a grenade or a passing round. I stared at the small wound in disbelief, then took out my penknife to dig out what felt like a burning bus lodged in my side. Having established that the wound really wasn't serious, the pain seemed to die away and, rather than make matters worse with the penknife, I sprinkled antibiotic powder over it instead and tucked my shirt back in. I was furious with myself for not having brought a proper medical kit. I'd never allowed myself to travel without one before. It could so easily have been more serious. I vowed never again to be caught out by such a stupid blunder.

I also found I was very disoriented by the AGS-17 fire as all posts I could see were at least a thousand meters away. I was sure the AGS-17 only had a 500 meter effective range. Later I checked this out and found I was off by 500 meters. So time spent worrying about where the presumably closer, but unseen, AGS-17 post was located was unnecessary. Not knowing the capabilities

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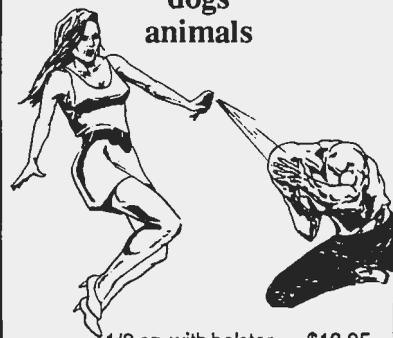
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of the opposition's weaponry can literally be a killer.

This first bolthole was not good, only slightly better than the path. When the fire died away to a few sporadic rounds we made a dash for better cover further up the gully, where its sides deepened into something approaching a trench. Here we had to wait out the day, as movement in either direction was far too hazardous over the totally exposed ground.

The mujahideen apologized and said that the posts normally ignored parties well dispersed on the path, but today they were just being belligerent and attempting to kill everybody on it. It happens sometimes. Now the subtle suggestions for a night move made sense. While proposing the idea they had failed to explain why they had put it forward, as this admission of no control over part of their patch would involve a loss of face. Instead they had philosophically dispatched us with a fatalistic hope that we would be spared.

Just before dark, with deepening purple shadows, we set off once again. What should have been a simple three hour walk took longer as this group was unfamiliar with the way and followed a path that added many hours to the march. We had climbed back up into the snow line and could see the lights of Kabul once again, spread out at our feet like a map. The path wound up and down over ridges with monotonous regularity.

A surprise meal and open hospitality around midnight were much welcomed when we chanced upon a lonely home high in the mountains. As luck would have it, a child was being born and we, as passing strangers, were invited to share the celebratory feast. We had hoped, at most, for tea and dry bread.

During the early hours we entered Paghman town. It had once been the retreat of the Kabul rich, as was visibly evident from the large brick houses. Here they had come to enjoy the cooler mountain air, and escape the oppressive summer heat of the city. Now nothing stirred. Empty, fire-blackened, shell-smashed homes lined the roads. We stopped to snatch a few hours sleep at a small mujahideen base.

We moved on the next night. The paths out of Paghman were now clear of snow. Frequently we passed the rotting corpses of horses killed by interdiction shell fire. We also passed other groups of mujahideen arriving, including a caravan of horses carrying 122mm rockets with which to bombard Kabul when the right time came.

I was relieved that the mountain pass and route back down into Argundy was without the deep snow that lay there when I came in. As a result of this we made better time. Before long we were approaching the pass to Maidan Shah, the town before Duranie, where I hoped for motorized transport back to Pakistan. It seemed like the last lap of a long race.

Just when it seemed that nothing more could happen to delay us, heavy artillery shells began to straddle the path in our im-

mediate vicinity. Some short-falling, others just passing over. The path was full of little knots of Afghans advancing by quick hurried dashes between salvos. Just a subtle reminder that nothing is ever guaranteed in Afghanistan except unexpected risk.

Mid-morning the next day I waited by the roadside outside Duranie while transport was arranged. As I sat under a blazing-hot sun I watched mujahideen mounting roadblocks. It reminded me very much of Lebanon. Every few miles along the road different armed groups each set up their own roadblocks. It was to be like this all the way back to Pakistan. It slowed travel down and created friction between parties.

Some analysts expect to see Afghanistan fractured into countless little fiefdoms controlled by warlords, all trying to extort as much out of rival groups as possible. This had been coined "the Lebanonization of Afghanistan." It is easy to see this disastrous scenario as a possible future for Afghanistan unless the factions are able, in their own best interest, to overcome the intense rivalry that currently exists.

Of all the commanders in Afghanistan, my feeling is that Massoud is the only one with the potential to bring even nominal unity to the country. He is the only major field commander to have spent the entire 10 years of the war based inside Afghanistan. His has been a daily struggle in the harsh mountains of the north while facing the strongest Soviet drives to crush the guerrillas. Now, when the Soviets have left the

field to the beleaguered forces of the Najibullah government, is the time when the mujahideen must close ranks and show that they are capable, not just of hit-and-run guerrilla tactics, but of the unified and sustained techniques of conventional warfare. Now is the time when the mujahideen need a strong leader in the field. A man of diplomatic as well as martial skills, able to unite the rival factions into a coherent force capable of taking Kabul. In my mind there is little doubt that Massoud is the man of the hour.

When the ubiquitous Toyota pickup finally arrived, everyone made a lunge for it to secure their seat. As ever it was packed beyond all belief with men, guns and equipment. It lurched to a sudden start which rocked all in the back, but we were wedged so tightly together, nobody was dislodged. Sitting in the back and coated in the thick clouds of choking dust kicked up in its wake, I watched Afghanistan receding from sight as night closed in, and we raced for the safety of Pakistan.

As the pickup sped on into the darkening night, I thought back over the past 10 years, of the heat and dust, the cold and wet, the long night marches, times of starvation and times of plenty, of laughter and tragedy, of all the Afghans I've accompanied into battle, of those who gave their lives...

I recalled the last lines of a famous Afghan poem:

"Now, when our house its mourning wears,

Do not thyself give way to tears:

Instruct our eldest son that I  
Was ever anxious thus to die,  
For when death comes the brave are  
free...

So in thy dreams remember me."

The Afghans aren't free yet, but certainly the war in Afghanistan will haunt my dreams. ✕

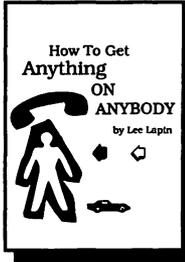
## COMBAT WEAPONCRAFT

Continued from page 14

fire also tends to unnerve RPG-7 rocket launcher operators. This alone may save a big chunk of your posterior.

The battle rifle is a great tool with many applications, but it takes some practice to master it. The soldier must employ it correctly and with maximum effectiveness if he is to retire at a ripe old age. Each combat situation demands a particular rate of fire. Failure to respond with the correct rate of fire will mean that not enough effective fire is produced or ammunition is expended too fast and without effect. It is the proper application of rates of fire that will avoid this.

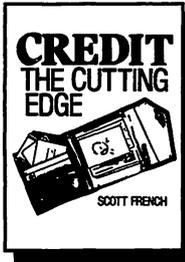
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## IN REVIEW

*Continued from page 19*

**THE VIOLENT DECADE.** Frank Gervasi. W.W. Norton & Company. Account of a top U.S. foreign correspondent in Europe and the Middle East during 1935-1945

**THE WALKING DEAD.** Craig Roberts and Charles W. Sasser. Pocket Books. From rifleman to recon leader to sniper, SOF contributor saw it all in Vietnam.

**THREE YEARS WITH SYLVIA.** Mike Hoare. Robert Hale Ltd. (London). To fulfill a life's dream, Hoare (of Congo fame) set sail for three years' cruising on the Med. (Out of print, so you'll have to search.)

**UNDER COVER.** John Roy Carlson. E.P. Dutton & Co. Mid-war account of author's membership in and investigation of Nazi groups in America, some of which still exist.

**VIETNAM — MILITARY LORE 1959-1973.** Master Sergeant Ray A. Bows. Bows & Sons. Everything from clubs, MPC, and chits to captured enemy documents.

**VIETNAM WAR BIBLIOGRAPHY.** Christopher L. Sugnet and John T. Hickey. Lexington Books. What's been published, from Abbie Hoffman to *365 Days*.

Military fiction: Anything by W.E.B. Griffin, Leonard Scott, or Tom Clancy. Military non-fiction: Anything by David Isby, Shelby Stanton, or Clay Blair, Jr. Best military publisher: Presidio Press. Best military how-to publisher: Paladin Press. Best military reference: Janes, Squadron/Signal Publications

## MINI-MAGNUM FORCE

*Continued from page 67*

and make sure it seats firmly against the rear of the frame. To unload, follow the same procedure and use the cylinder pin to knock out the empty cases.

There is a safety notch between each chamber, so the Mini-Revolver can be carried safely with all five "beans in the wheel." To reset the hammer in one of the safety notches, first point the muzzle in a safe direction and then draw the hammer back into the half-cocked position. Making sure that you have full control over the hammer and that it cannot slip from your grasp, draw it back slightly past the half-cock position until you can rotate the cylinder freely. Turn the cylinder and align one of the safety

notches with the hammer. Holding the hammer securely, pull the trigger and ease the hammer forward into the safety notch.

Five shots is two or three more than most derringers or other mini-revolvers provide. This should be enough for any anticipated close-range scenario involving a firearm of this type.

To fire, draw the hammer back until it locks in the cocked position. Aim and pull the trigger. The sights are crude, but sufficient. There is a rounded, fixed front-sight blade and a hump on each side of the frame's hammer/firing pin notch that's supposed to serve as a rear sight. Forget this so-called rear-sight. If you align the front sight with this notch, at 10 feet your shots will impact eight inches below the point of aim. We discovered this the hard way, after we shot three holes into the skyscreens of our Oehler Model 35P chronograph. Use the top of the frame as an aiming rib with the front sight blade resting on top like the front bead on a shotgun. This will guarantee shot placement to the point of aim. Trigger pull-weight on our test specimen was a very spongy 3¼ pounds.

The fact that you can hit what you're aiming at is a primary consideration, but it doesn't necessarily mean that your opponent will drop in his tracks. For that to happen with a handgun, we need some effective performance from the cartridge (and some of the blessings shared by those having exceptionally close liaison with the Almighty). And what exactly can we expect from a .22 caliber rimfire cartridge fired from a 1½-inch barrel? More than you might suppose.

As we have stated many times before, penetration is the most important single parameter in an assessment of a cartridge's wound ballistics potential. The bullet must penetrate deeply enough to crush, cut and break through the human body's vital structures and organs. The capability to penetrate from 12 to 20 inches of soft tissue is the desired standard, as we may have some bones to break and varying amounts of fabric to penetrate. Your opponent may also have his arms in front of his body holding a weapon, and the projectile may have to penetrate that part of his anatomy also before it drives into his torso. Without sacrificing penetration, the bullet that makes the biggest hole will do the most damage.

The 36-grain lead Hollow Point (HP) bullet of a Remington High Velocity .22 LR round will be traveling at only 885 fps 10 feet from the Mini-Revolver's 1½-inch barrel. It will not expand at this velocity. Sometimes it yaws 180 degrees in soft tissue to end up base forward and sometimes it doesn't. Whether it does or not, penetration is no more than 8.6 inches.

Winchester Super-X .22 Magnum Rimfire ammunition has a 40-grain Jacketed Hollow Point (JHP) bullet that moves out at an even slower 830 fps. This not surprising, as .22 Magnum Rimfire ammunition requires somewhat longer barrels than .22 LR ammunition to reach its maximum velocity



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potential. In this instance, a significant portion of the propellant charge is undoubtedly blown out the barrel to do no more than increase the muzzle flash and blast. Once again, the JHP bullets will not expand and sometimes they yaw 180 degrees and other times reach the end of their penetration round-nose forward. Penetration exhibits a marginal increase to 9.2 inches.

Remington High Velocity .22 LR ammunition with 40-grain solid lead round nose bullets will approach 1,250 fps out of the muzzle of a rifle-length barrel. This drops to little better than 850 fps when fired through the Mini-Revolver's 1½-inch tube. Penetration is an anemic 7.4 inches in soft tissue.

All of the above is no better than mediocre. However, Winchester Super-X .22 Magnum Rimfire ammunition with 40-grain Full Metal Jacket (FMJ) bullets provides significantly superior performance. While the muzzle velocity only hovers around 900 fps (less than half that produced by rifles in this caliber), the penetration in soft tissue is a respectable 11.1 inches. That's not too shabby for an addition of merely 5.9 ounces to your coat pocket. Furthermore, this bullet (sometimes still referred to as an "FMC", or Full Metal Case, projectile) will usually yaw 180 degrees at ¾ to 2 inches of penetration. Where the bullet yaw is at its maximum, 60 to 120 degrees, the height of the permanent cavity (wound track) will increase to 0.62 inches.

Some have recommended the use of .22 Magnum Rimfire shotshells in this revolver. I consider this to be ill-advised. CCI's .22 Maxi-Mag shotshells carry ⅛-ounce of #11 shot (approximately 172 pellets) in a plastic capsule. This tiny rat shot will probably not penetrate most clothing and, even if it does, will never drive far enough into soft tissue to reach the human body's vital structures.

Although to date SOF has not tested it, a better choice might be Federal's .22 Magnum Rimfire with a 50-grain Hollow Point bullet. Its velocity will probably drop to no more than 750 fps out of the 1½-inch barrel. It will not expand at this speed, but its heavier projectile may penetrate somewhat more deeply than the 40-grain FMJ projectile.

I do not envision firing the NAA Mini-Revolver at human targets much beyond 10 to 15 feet. At that distance, an experienced pistolero can expect to fire consistent head shots. A well-placed upper torso hit should also cause significant damage.

There's no trick to controlling the NAA Mini-Revolver. While the muzzle flip is apparent, perceived recoil remains moderate. The grip portion of the frame is larger on the .22 Magnum models than the .22 LR-only versions and this enhances controllability to a modest extent. There were no stoppages during our test and evaluation. Reliability and durability are more than adequate for a handgun of this type.

Two other barrel lengths are available: 1½ inches and 2½ inches. The .22 Short and .22 LR-only models are one inch and ¾ inch shorter, respectively, in each barrel

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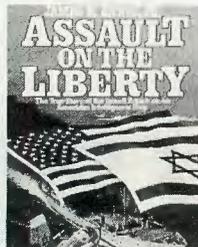
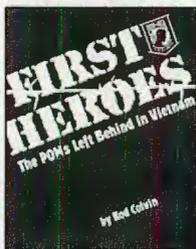
length than the .22 Magnum Rimfire model because of their shorter cylinders. However, the NAA-22MS Mini-Revolver offers significantly more effective performance with an overall length that is only one inch longer than the .22 Short version.

Just tossing this tiny handgun, or any other for that matter, into your coat pocket would be a major error. Left free to shift about, odds are that, more often than not, you would grab onto the muzzle or cylinder instead of the grips. This won't do. A consistent, almost instinctive, draw stroke is required for the proper presentation of any combat handgun. At our request, custom holster designer and maker Bruce Nelson (Dept. SOF, P.O. Box 8691 CRB, Tucson, AZ 85738 — catalog \$3) provided the perfect answer for packing the NAA Mini-Revolver.

Bruce scaled down his versatile #25 holster and attached a Velcro lining to its leather backplate. Velcro strips can be sewn into a briefcase, purse or the pocket of a sport coat or safari jacket to secure the rig. The precision hand-molded holster has been stitched to the backplate without cant, so it can be carried strong side or crossdraw. Retention is sufficient enough to preclude the use of any retaining device, such as a dot snap or Velcro strap.

If you carry your primary piece in the crossdraw position, then the back-up should be worn somewhere on the strong side. The draw stroke sequence would be as follows. Grab the bottom of the coat or jacket with the weak hand. Reach into the pocket with the firing hand and withdraw the revolver. Move the weak hand toward the grip and into the Weaver position as you swing the piece upward to engage the target with the front sight, and simultaneously cock the hammer rearward with the thumb of the firing hand. Be careful not to permit the thumb or any of the fingers to impede the cylinder's rotation.

Representing the best possible compromise between the envelope required for deep concealment and effective wound ballistics, the NAA-22MS's suggested retail price is only \$158. As .22 Magnum Rimfire ammunition is relatively expensive, you might want the .22 LR cylinder for practice sessions. That will cost you \$190, complete with both cylinders. For further information contact North American Arms (Dept. SOF, 1800 North 300 West, Spanish Fork, UT 84660, phone: 1-800-821-5783).



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*Continued from page 51*

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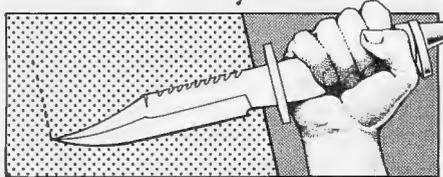
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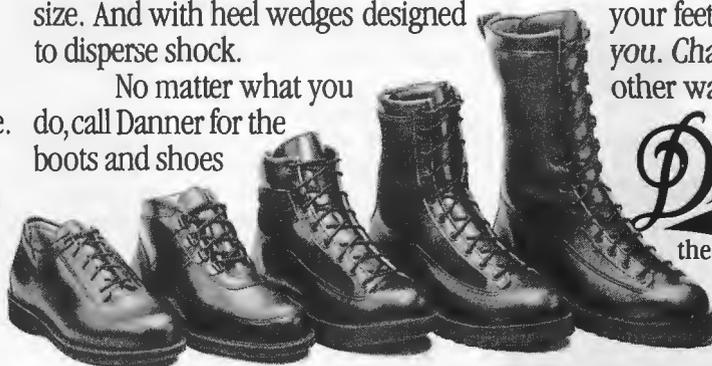
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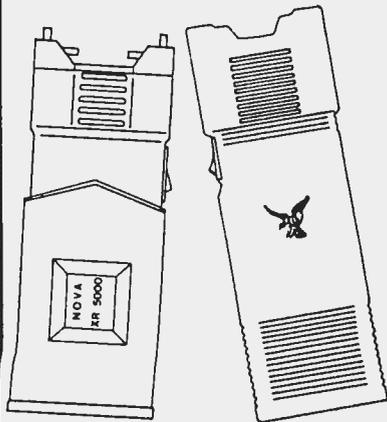
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tions course, the Civil Affairs Enlisted course, and the Civil Affairs Officer course.

### International Studies

International studies are so important to special operations that regional background studies are taught in nearly every course at SWCS to illustrate the impact of geography and culture. The two primary courses taught by the International Studies Department are the Special Officer Staff Officer course and the Regional Studies course. The former program teaches field-grade officers special operations staff procedures. The Regional Studies course was formerly the Foreign Area Officer Department and is designed to prepare officers for foreign service. The seven-week course provides selected officers with background on the regions to which they have been assigned. This course is one part of the Army's Foreign Area Officer program that also includes language training and graduate study. The SWCS course emphasizes cultural, political, and military concerns. Students also learn research and analysis techniques and the details of U.S. foreign policy.

### Foreign Language

Special Forces soldiers must have foreign language capability to accomplish many of their missions. In partial accommodation of this requirement, SWCS currently conducts 16-week courses in several foreign languages and many more are coming on line. However, this instruction merely aims at achieving survival level proficiency. For a variety of reasons, including the difficulty of releasing SF soldiers for the necessary time and other readiness related conditions, efforts to provide working level language proficiency have been less than successful. The staff of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations and Low Intensity Conflict is working closely with the staffs of the Defense Foreign Language Program, of TRADOC Headquarters, and of SWCS to develop the programmatic changes necessary to add depth to this critical area of Special Forces training.

### SERE/Combating Terrorism

This training department goes by the long title of Survival, Evasion, Resistance, and Escape (SERE) and Combating Terrorism. The department provides two courses in SERE and two courses in anti-terrorism. SERE instruction was designed by former prisoner-of-war Colonel James N. "Nick" Rowe, who was recently assassinated in the Philippines. Students are also taught to survive in the wild and are given realistic training in resistance to enemy interrogation and exploitation.

Anti-terrorism training is designed for personnel serving overseas on advisory, peacekeeping, or training missions. The courses being taught are Individual Terrorism Awareness and the Anti-terrorism Instructor course. Students learn the fundamentals of terrorism, and how to survive a hostage situation and return with honor.

### NCO Academy

The SWCS Noncommissioned Officer Academy teaches leadership. Enlisted sol-

diers learn to direct and train subordinates in the following fields of service: medical, engineers, communications, weapons and psychological operations.

### Force Support

SWCS is charged with providing many services to the special operations community. Unfortunately, some of these services were neglected during the "Dark Ages of Special Forces" that followed the conflict in Vietnam. The revitalization effort that began under the former commander, Brigadier General James A. Guest, appears to be continuing under the current commander, Brigadier General David J. Baratto. Improvements in the following major activities are worthy of mention: training and doctrine, proponentcy, combat development, security assistance, joint integration and information.

### Training and Doctrine

Special Forces have the most difficult training task of any armed force. They must be able to fight in any environment on any level of war. Many units must be proficient in special infiltration techniques, and all units must be able to train indigenous forces. Special Forces, therefore, have a great need for training guides and plans. But most of the necessary training plans are outdated and units have been forced to piece together infantry manuals, write their own, or go without. It is encouraging, therefore, that SWCS is conducting the mission analysis process needed to produce Mission Training Plans (MTPs). Forthcoming MTPs will provide the "how to" for each Special Forces mission, from tasking to post-exfiltration debrief.

Another problem that has faced SOF is the lack of doctrine. Published doctrine was outdated, and joint doctrine did not exist. SWCS has filled some of the void with the development of Field Manual (FM) 31-20, *Special Forces Operations*. This document defines the role Special Forces units play across the entire spectrum of conflict. Most important, FM 31-20 explains the function of Special Forces in mid- and high-intensity conflicts. America's doctrinal plan for fighting a major war is called the Air-Land Battle. FM 31-20 will be instrumental in integrating Special Forces and conventional force capabilities into the combined arms approach needed for the Air-Land Battle. USSOCOM also has significant doctrinal role and is currently developing JCS Pub 3-05, *Doctrine for Joint Special Operations*. This manual defines special operational terms and roles and will help overcome some of our inter-service operational problems.

### Proponentcy

The Office of Proponentcy manages SOF career fields for the Army. This includes the Special Forces, Civil Affairs, and Psychological Operations career fields for officers, warrant officers, and enlisted. The Office of Proponentcy was instrumental in the Special Forces career field, becoming the Army's newest branch for officers. This elevates the Special Forces to the status enjoyed by infantry, armor, and artillery branches.

## Combat Development

The Directorate of the Combat Developments designs new SOF equipment, evaluates employment concepts and doctrine, and adjusts the force structure. Combat Developments is always working to give soldiers in the field lighter equipment and better protection against the weather. A few of the many other projects under production are a secure radio with increased range, an improved noise-suppressed weapon, a snowmobile, and a desert mobility vehicle. One of the most interesting recent developments is the Tandem Parachute System. This device allows someone not familiar with parachuting (like a political figure or a scientist) to be piggyback infiltrated with a soldier experienced in military freefall.

## Security Assistance

One of the missions of the Special Forces is to act as a military Peace Corps. Allied nations are increasingly requesting help with training their forces or with providing medical aid to their people. The Security Assistance Training Management Office funds and oversees the deployment of the assistance teams.

## Joint Force Integration Directorate

The Joint Force Integration Directorate (JFID) integrates special operations doctrine, training, force structure, and material in the inter-service arena, as well as within the Army. JFID evaluates training and serves as a focal point for war-gaming and simulation.

## Information

In April 1988, the Public Affairs Office began publishing a quarterly professional bulletin called *Special Warfare*. The bulletin is more of a journal than a newsletter and allows SWCS project officers to broadcast changes and developments. The significance of *Special Warfare* is that it keeps the far-flung Special Forces units abreast of recent initiatives in training, doctrine, and equipment. It also provides career information about promotions, schools and assignments.

## Conclusion

The John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School began as a small specialty school for partisan warriors. SWCS has grown over the years, and today it can indeed be considered as America's University of Special Operations. The United States has rediscovered the utility of SOF and SWCS plays a vital role in revitalizing the forces. Ever increasing demands are being placed on SWCS and we can only hope that quality is never sacrificed for quantity. The premise of Special Operations is that one lion is better than a thousand sheep. SWCS' role is to provide the lions. 🦁

## LANCE MOTLEY

*Continued from page 57*

instead of "fuze." The answer is simple: "deto" is the abbreviation of the French



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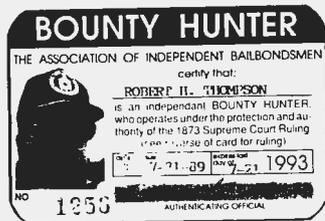
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word "detonateur." And, well, some French have been by here. We follow the technicians as they move up to the front line with a full load of mines and booby traps; there are even two Claymores. It's great sport! When we arrive everyone is working: they are deepening the trenches, installing more barbed wire flush with the ground; Lance had explained to one of the officers earlier how to build tanglefoot obstacles, to prevent the Burmese from passing under the fences. Lance goes off with the men who are mining the bank of the Moei River; I stop to take some photos of the bunkers and trenches, then move out to join him. Like him, I am going through the barbed-wire barrier when someone behind me calls out, "Mines." OK, I'm not going any farther. Lance is just in front of me standing on a mound overlooking and taking pictures of the men who are putting in mines.

Sound of a mortar being fired from the Burmese positions. I hit the dirt. Lance turns toward the communist lines and also gets down. Explosion, concussion in the air, a cloud of dust. My vision is confused; I have just taken the blast in my face. Lance's silhouette emerges from the dispersing cloud. He is still crouching, stiff, then slowly falls over on one side. A groan, and then nothing. He's dead, the bastards got him. No, he is still alive, he moves. He turns a blackened face toward me, holds out his hand.

"Alain, help me."

If only I knew where the mines were.

"Don't move, Lance, don't move."

The mortar fires again. No matter, I jump up. A cry of "Mines" too late; the mine starts hissing. My heart stops and then starts pounding, but I don't dare move. But the initiator fails somehow to detonate the mine's primary charge. One of the sappers clears a passage for me. The mortar shells fall long, somewhere in Thailand. I can finally make it to Lance. I drag him to cover. He's badly hit and bleeding; his left thigh has a deep cut about 8 inches long and of his right hand only the little finger is intact, the rest is hanging down. The mortar fires again. Can't stay here. Somehow, we get back through the wire. A medic shows up. Compression bandage, morphine, IV. They put him on a litter. Now the artillery is firing. Can't leave him here. We move out by short bounds between shells, run and hit the dirt. Lance is getting paler and paler; he is suffering from this treatment. One of the litter-bearers falls, blood running along his leg. The Burmese artillery is costing us valuable time. Finally we reach the dugout canoe and cross the Moei. Lance's eyes close. I make him talk, can't let him sink into unconsciousness. The medic gives him another injection; it seems to bring him a little way out of the mists. Now we're in Thailand and they put him in a pickup while I go looking for his passport. I rejoin him in the hospital in Mae Sot. There, I take a tape recording from him for his embassy, not knowing that these are his last words.

Some people will think that what happened to Lance was only an accident. One

more reporter killed doing his job. Having served in an airborne artillery regiment I am well placed to know that this is not the case. I have several reasons for saying this:

1. During the several days we were at Komura, the Burmese army only used artillery and never used a mortar. Further, their targets were always the sawmill and the headquarters.

2. The place where Lance was wounded had never been shelled and only Lance was visible in that sector. Lance was tall and wore a beard; hence, even with binoculars, he could not have been mistaken for a Karen, as I might have been. It is very unlikely that the Burmese army would have fired at a single Karen, and especially with such an intensity of fire.

3. The choice of weapons: a 60mm mortar. This type of mortar is generally used for close-range direct support of infantry. In competent hands this weapon is capable of deadly precision, as in this case.

Everything leads me to believe that the Burmese, having spotted us, decided to drive us off or kill us. Further, no attack was made after the shelling of the camp. This is not the way the Burmese usually do things. In fact, since the beginning of the siege of the Komura camp, the Burmese had never deployed such a volume of fire without following it up with an attempted assault. Further, the Burmese always attacked at night.

Why was the presence of reporters such an embarrassment to them? Quite simply because dictatorships like the Rangoon regime are afraid that people like Lance will report and condemn their actions. This, after all, was Lance's profession, his battle. His weapons were his camera and his pen. His objective was to report and make known a whole multitude of conflicts which people forget too easily. He chose this life since in these forgotten wars the only interest taken by the outside world is perhaps some day to see a new democracy sweep away these communist regimes. And he died for all that because he was a free man and an American. ✕

## COMMANDO GUNNERS

*Continued from page 29*

parachutists. Varying opinions were expressed as to the relative difficulty in passing the two courses. Opinion seemed to depend on whether the speaker wore para wings or not!

Recruits for the Regiment are all volunteers from the rest of the Royal Artillery. Teams from 29 visit the RA depot and the Junior Leaders Regiment to speak to the recruits and convince them of the delights of life in the Commandos. Any resulting volunteers are then dispatched to Plymouth on completion of their basic training.

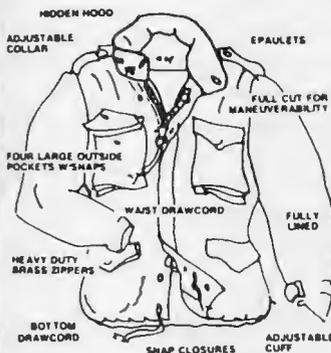
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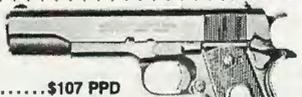
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allowed to be blocked. Junior NCOs who wish to transfer are required to relinquish their rank in order to do so. These mature volunteers often find the Commando course easier than the new recruits.

148 Battery has 10 naval ratings as an integral part of the unit. These sailors, who operate the communications between shore and ship, are also volunteers, and must pass the Commando and Parachute courses before being accepted. Many volunteer for a second two-year tour at a later stage in their career, despite the fact that they may lose promotion by doing so.

The officers are also all volunteers who have to complete the Commando course on equal terms with the soldiers; there are no free rides here. Junior officers who have served in 29 often return for second tours as battery commanders, and the CO will usually have qualified for his beret earlier in his career.

In addition to its 18 105mm light guns the Regiment is equipped with standard British artillery equipment, including the FACE fire control computer. Each battery holds two computers, with a further set in Regimental Headquarters. While I was visiting the Regiment they were trying out a new hand-held computer which is intended as a backup to the old and rather fragile FACE.

Standard towing vehicle for the light gun is a one-ton Land-Rover 4X4, but the Regiment also holds Volvo tracked vehicles for Arctic snow work. These are now getting rather tired and the soldiers find them difficult to keep in fighting trim, but a new version is in sight.

I visited 29 Commando Regiment for SOF, and was invited to accompany a troop of 8 (Alma) Battery to Larkhill Ranges near Salisbury. The Regiment had just returned from a grueling three-week practice camp in the north of England, and this firing was simply a quiet day out to provide practice in artillery observation for a new intake of 148 (Meiktila) Battery. As a result there was plenty of time to talk to the soldiers.

The overall impression was one of great self-confidence, high morale and professional competence. The majority of the senior non-coms are veterans of the Falklands, and although most of the officers have changed since the war there remains a solid backbone of current combat experience. It was the unanimous feeling in the sergeants mess that the Falklands had proved that the main thrust of their prior training had been exactly on target, and that the Regiment was ready to prove itself again if need be.

If Britain's Royal Marines have to take the field anywhere in the world they can be assured that their artillery support will be timely and on target. The Empire is ready to strike back again! ✘

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**PLEASE WATCH YOUR LANGUAGE...**

Sirs:  
Paul Danish's SITREP in the August edition of SOF was a fine article on gun grab legislation across the country, and I hope you'll continue to publish such updates at regular intervals. However, Danish inadvertently made one error that needs to be corrected. Throughout his article, he refers to legislation that is supposed to ban "assault rifles." In the interest of accuracy, he should have said "assault rifle replicas" or "assault rifle look-alikes." Federal law already forbids the ownership of genuine assault rifles (which are classified as machine guns) except under certain rigidly controlled circumstances.

I realize that Danish and the rest of the folks at SOF know this as well as I do, and I hope you'll accept my criticism in the helpful spirit that it's offered. The error I've pointed out is a common one and very easy to make without intending to; I've made it a couple of times myself. But those of us who know better ought to train ourselves to avoid it at all costs. The gun grabbers have most of the major new media in this country on their side already. They don't need any additional help from those of us who are fighting to preserve what's left of the Second Amendment.

Joe Williams  
Cedartown, Georgia  
Point well taken.

**PERESTROIKA OR PEREDISHKA...**

Sirs:  
SOF has not been deceived by all the "glasnost" and "perestroika" going around. The Russians also have another term: "peredishka," which means taking a breather. When the Soviets get that very much needed second wind, unfortunately with Western oxygen, they will be back in business with renewed energy. Lenin was wise to point out that it was the capitalists who would sell the rope with which they were going to be hanged. Congratulations to SOF on a job well done and keep it coming!

Jerzy S. Zubr  
St. Petersburg, Florida

**CRACK REPORT OUTSTANDING...**

Sirs:  
I am not normally a reader of SOF, but I noticed your June cover story on crack and gangs in Los Angeles, and I bought it because I believe this is a huge problem for the United States. After reading the magazine, I think yours was the most comprehensive story I've ever read on this topic. I especially appreciate the fact that it was covered from the law enforcement point of view, rather than the usual sappy, sympathetic articles found in most newspapers and magazines.

I look forward to reading more quality articles like that in the future.  
Lawrence Kopf  
Long Beach, New York

**HOPE KEPT ALIVE...**

Sirs:  
The May 1989 issue struck a chord.  
I am wearing a [MIA] bracelet that says "M/Sgt. Harold Mullins, 6-3-66." I have not seen his name on any lists of returned or accounted for and have received no replies to my inquiries.

Figuring the age range of master sergeants in the mid-1960s and the time elapsed since, Top Mullins would be in his mid- to late-'60s by now. That's a hell of a way to spend your golden years! If anybody out there knows what happened to him, and if there's any final disposition on the case, some of us here, particularly some of my badge buddies who have been wearing these bracelets for a long time, would like to know.

If M/Sgt. Mullins made it back, we kept the faith, Top. If he didn't, we down here would like to know the latest chapter.

Jim Shirah  
Columbus, Georgia

**LETTERS**

Your input has made Flak one of SOF's most popular columns. Write and tell us your opinion of SOF or any subject you consider worth our readers' attention. We reserve the right to edit for content and brevity. Send letters to FLAK, c/o SOF, PO Box 693, Boulder, CO 80306. ✕

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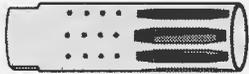
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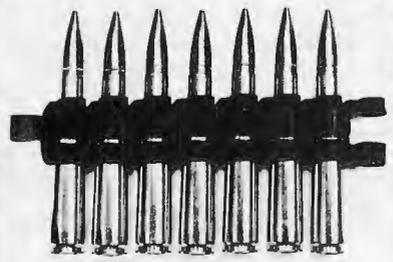
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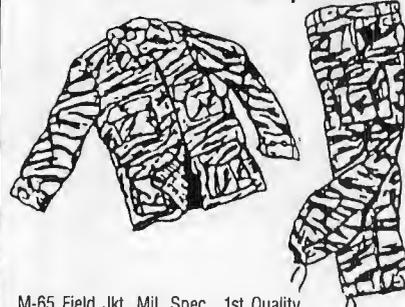
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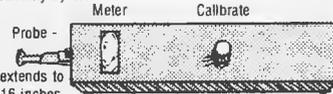
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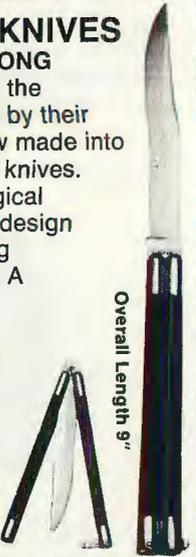
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# One We Won

by SOF Staff

ON 17 August 1989, the United States Court of Appeals, Fifth Circuit, reached a decision in the case of Marjorie A. Eimann, et al., Plaintiffs-Appellees, v. *Soldier of Fortune Magazine, Inc.*, et al., Defendants-Appellants.

The case itself? SOF readers will recall the Houston, Texas, trial; the end result was a \$9.4 million judgment against *Soldier of Fortune Magazine*.

The Circuit Court's decision? "The judgment of the district court is REVERSED and RENDERED."

In other words, we won.

We cannot speak more eloquently than did the Honorable Judges Garwood, Jolly and Davis of the Fifth Circuit in their written decision. What follows are extracts taken from that decision, with the primary emphasis on the Court's interpretation of Texas negligence law, the basis they used for reversing the Houston District Court's decision against us.

"Assuming without deciding that a Texas court would apply general negligence principles to this case, we conclude that no liability can attach under these principles as a matter of law. SOF owed no duty to refrain from publishing a facially innocuous classified advertisement when the ad's context — at most — made its message ambiguous. The existence of a duty presents a threshold question of law for the court; the jury determines breach and proximate cause only after the court concludes that a duty exists.

"In essence, a duty represents a legally enforceable obligation to conform to a particular standard of conduct.

"Thus . . . the Supreme Court of Texas has weighed the risk, foreseeability and likelihood of injury from certain conduct against the conduct's social utility and the burden of guarding against injury.

"Our analysis here assumes that SOF owes a duty of reasonable care to the public; we focus on the second prong of the duty issue: whether SOF's decision to print Hearn's ad violated the standard of conduct.

"In answering this question we look to Judge Learned Hand's concise expression of these balancing principles . . . As he described it in algebraic terms, liability turns on whether the burden of adequate precautions, B, is less than the probability of harm, P, multiplied by the gravity of the resulting injury, L.

"In assessing the threatened harm we note that 'nearly all human acts . . . carry some recognizable but remote possibility of harm to another.'

# PARTING SHOT

" . . . the gravity of the threatened harm may require precautions against even unlikely events. For example, the standard of care may require those who own oil storage tanks to take precautions against fires caused by an unpredictable lightning strike. The prospect of ad-inspired crime represents a threat of serious harm.

"SOF contends that the standard of conduct applied by the district court impermissibly required the magazine to guard against criminal solicitation by investigating its advertisers and their ads.

"However, in our view the standard of conduct against which the jury measured SOF's actions was more exacting than a duty to investigate; it requires publishers to recognize ads that 'reasonably could be interpreted as an offer to engage in illegal activity' based on their words of 'context' and refrain from printing them.

"At most, the evidence reveals that Hearn submitted a facially innocuous ad. Standing alone, the phrase 'high-risk assignments' plausibly encompassed Hearn's professed goal of recruiting candidates for bodyguard jobs. Hearn performed precisely that function for at least one client who contacted him through the ad.

"Eimann's effort to portray Hearn's ad as a readily identifiable criminal solicitation falls with Dr. Dietz's repudiation of his effort to identify specific code words signalling criminal intent. At one point in his testimony, Dr. Dietz analyzed a classified ad from the February 1980 issue of SOF. In terms that parallel Hearn's ad, this 1980 ad recruited SOF readers for 'exciting high risk undercover stateside work.' Dr. Dietz stated: In 1984, in my opinion, someone familiar with classified ads that have been run for years in *Soldier of Fortune* would be able to recognize from that ad that this is possibly someone who would be willing to be involved in criminal activity; but they might be wrong when they thought that. We knew that sometimes there were honest advertisers, and we know that some of the readers who responded to ads were honest too.

"Dr. Dietz's description applies with equal force to Hearn's ad. Its bare terms reveal no identifiable offer to commit crimes, just as a locksmith's ad in the telephone directory reveals nothing about that particular advertiser's willingness to commit burglaries or steal cars.

"This ambiguity persists even if we assume that SOF knew other ads had been tied to criminal plots. No evidence linked the other ads and crimes to Hearn. And as Eimann conceded, even if SOF had investigated Hearn and his partner in 1984, it would have discovered no criminal records and no false information that might have aroused suspicion.

"Further, Eimann's heavy reliance on 'context' cannot compensate for the fundamental ambiguity of Hearn's ad even if we assume that the district court properly defined that context. The presence in SOF of other ads and articles with violent themes provides no realistic method for gauging the likelihood that a par-

ticular ad will foster illegal activity. Do ads touting high-performance cars become solicitations for illegal activity when buyers drive them beyond the speed limit? Only when the ads run in *Car and Driver* magazine? Or, only when the ads run in magazines that also contain ads for radar detectors?

" . . . a standard of conduct that imposes tort liability whenever the advertised product 'could reasonably be interpreted as an offer to engage in illegal activity' — or might 'relate to' criminal conduct — imposes an especially heavy burden. The comments of a court faced with a duty-to-investigate claim apply here: For the law to permit such exposure to those in the publishing business who in good faith accept paid advertisements for a myriad of products would open the doors 'to a liability in an indeterminate amount for an indeterminate time to an indeterminate class.'

"We conclude that the standard of conduct imposed by the district court does not strike the proper balance between the risks of harm from ambiguous advertisements and the burden of preventing harm from this source under these facts. The appreciable risk that ads such as Hearn's will cause harm, combined with the gravity of that harm, does not outweigh the onerous burden Eimann asks us to endorse.

"Hearn's ad presents a risk of serious harm. But everyday activities, such as driving on high-speed, closed access roadways, also carry definite risks that we as a society choose to accept in return for the activity's usefulness and convenience. Given the pervasiveness of advertising in our society and the important role it plays, we decline to impose on publishers the obligation to reject all ambiguous advertisements for products or services that might pose a threat of harm.

"The standard of conduct imposed by the district court against SOF is too high; it allows a jury to visit liability on a publisher for untoward consequences that flow from his decision to publish any suspicious, ambiguous ad that might cause serious harm. The burden on a publisher to avoid liability from suits of this type is too great: he must reject all such advertisements.

"The range of foreseeable misuses of advertised products and services is as limitless as the forms and functions of the products themselves. Without a more specific indication of illegal intent than Hearn's ad or its context provided, we conclude that SOF did not violate the required standard of conduct by publishing an ad that later played a role in criminal activity.

"The judgment of the district court is REVERSED and RENDERED."

We here at *Soldier of Fortune Magazine* want to extend our deepest and most sincere thanks to all of you readers who stood by us and supported us during this hard-fought battle. The war isn't yet won — there are still similar cases lined up against us — but the Fifth Circuit's decision will undoubtedly have a strong impact on their outcome.

Stand in the door, folks! SOF's ready for the next decade. ✕

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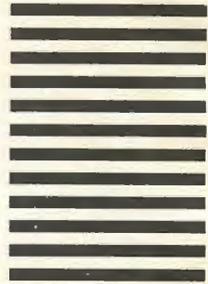
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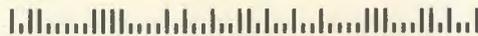
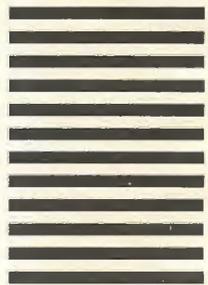
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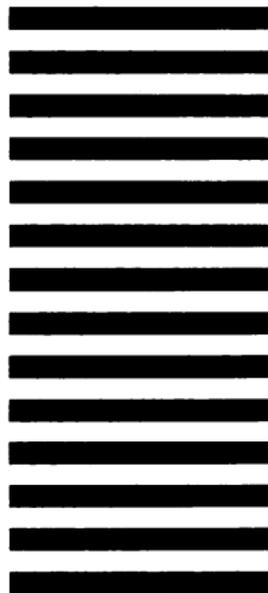
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